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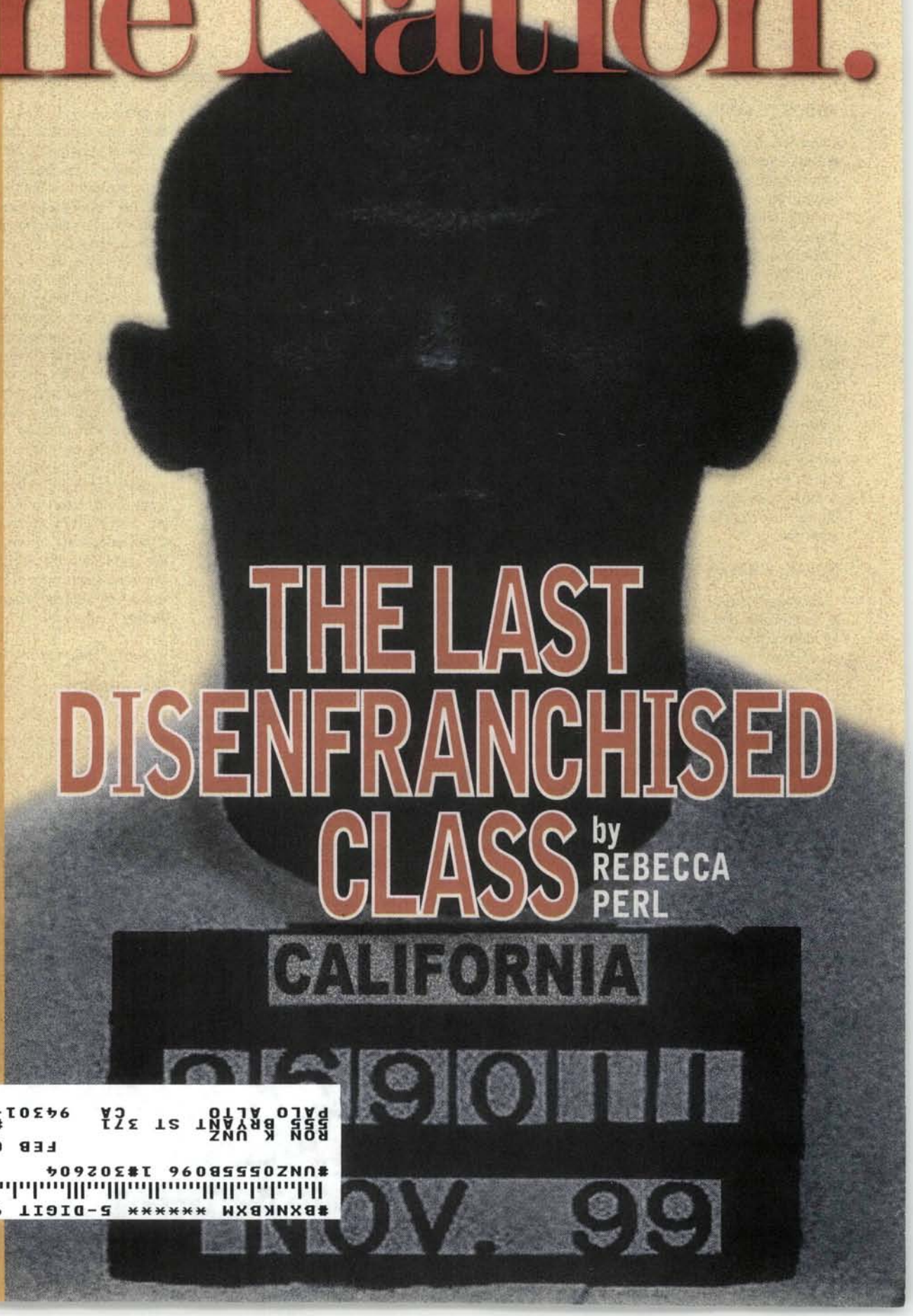

THE LAST DISENFRANCHISED CLASS

by REBECCA PERL

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LETTERS

R.O. BLECHMAN

KUDOS TO CORN

Cambridge, Mass.

■ Kudos to David Corn for being the first to report Robert Novak's White House leak way back in July. Simply the best investigative reporting, which I've come to expect from *The Nation*. My roommate called me into the room while watching the "breaking" Joe Wilson–White House news on CNN, to ask if I had heard. Yes, I said—months ago.

MATTHEW G. GRONDIN

Washington, DC

■ I offer my praise and admiration to David Corn. Long before the mainstream media were gasping about the White House leak, Corn was reporting the story. I immediately referenced his column(s) when I began seeing the leak scandal on TV and felt immensely thankful knowing that I can rely on *The Nation* and its reporters. Kudos to a sublime publication that illustrates the need for unfiltered, honest, investigative reporting.

ALLISON JOHNSON

NOVAK: 'CRAVEN WATER-CARRIER'

Cambridge, Mass.

■ As probably one of a small number of registered Republicans who read *The Nation* cover to cover every week, I have often disagreed with its commentary. Not this past week. Thank you, Eric Alterman, for giving voice to something I and other conservatives (not neocons) have been raging about ["Stop the Presses," Nov. 3]: Robert Novak is not, nor has he ever been, a journalist. He is a craven water-carrier for every hateful agenda ever concocted by the radical fringe of what was once a worthy party. His despicable and cowardly action in "outing" the estimable wife of former ambassador Joe Wilson should have made him a pariah. While I rigorously defend the sacred rights of journalists to protect sources, for this Neanderthal I extend no such privilege. He should be tried and imprisoned. He is not Daniel Ellsberg bringing important new knowledge forward. He is a worthless scoundrel.

RICHARD GONCI

Laughlin, Nev.

■ The Novak incident is distressing to anyone in the intelligence community. As a retired member of that group I have always trusted that my connection would never be exposed (placing not only myself but my family in danger). Then to see the smug Novak not only exposing someone but not being jailed for it is beyond belief. The person who leaked the information to him should be punished, but Novak should be charged with treason for naming a member of the intelligence community in a time of war.

"JOHN C. ANDREWS"

Cambridge, Mass.

■ As Eric Alterman implies, the mainstream media have dropped the ball on Robert Novak's revelation of the identity of an undercover CIA agent. Perhaps they believe that criticizing Novak will narrow the reporter's privilege to keep information sources confidential. But the reporter's privilege is not absolute. Every case requires balancing the public's First Amendment right to know against the government's interest in confidentiality. In this case the public has no "right to know" the information revealed, and Novak has no right to invoke the First Amendment. Unlike a typical whistleblower case, this was not a leak of information useful to the public; it was a deliberate plant for political purposes.

ALICE DANIEL, *former judge and professor of constitutional law*

COUP IN THE GOLDEN STATE

San Diego

■ Your coverage of the recent recall of California Governor Gray Davis was abominable ["The Morning After in California," Oct. 27]. Your editorial and Marc Cooper and Alexander Cockburn all attempt to portray it as some kind of spontaneous populist rebellion instead of what it was: a right-wing coup, fueled by $1.7 million from reactionary Congressman Darrell Issa and pushed to success by relentless propaganda on hard-right radio talk shows.

Davis wasn't targeted for recall for what he did wrong but for what he did *right*. Despite his Clintonesque corporate whoredom, he actually did a lot of progressive things in office, like signing into law the nation's toughest anti-pollution laws against cars, ordering that workers be paid overtime after eight hours a day (reversing the viciously anti-labor policy of his Republican predecessor, Pete Wilson), signing domestic-partner legislation that goes further in recognizing the rights of gay and lesbian couples than any other state's besides Vermont, supporting the rights of Native Americans to raise money through gambling and, most notorious for his opponents, signing a bill to give undocumented immigrants driver's licenses.

The pro-recall propagandists unashamedly promised to end all these progressive advances. Under Arnold Schwarzenegger—who showed his true colors when he refused campaign contributions from labor and Native Americans on the grounds that they were "special interests" but accepted them from corporations and land developers—California's workers, people of color and queers are likely to find themselves the second-class citizens they were under Davis's predecessors. And contrary to your pie-in-the-sky hopes, Schwarzenegger as governor is more likely to help George Bush's chances for election in 2004.

MARK GABRISH CONLAN

San Francisco

■ You have ignored California progressives' tremendous gains during the past five years despite Governor Davis. Rather than allow the Democratic governor to limit their agendas, activists held his feet to the fire and mobilized the grassroots to win sweeping progressive victories, including passage of the country's strictest auto-emissions standards, record spending for affordable housing and a domestic-partner law covering more than 15 percent of the nation's lesbians and gays. Davis signed bills doubling unemployment benefits, increasing worker protections, authorizing driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants and bolstering union organizing. California enacted Senator John Burton's "pay to play" healthcare measure, which will bring coverage to more than 1 million residents.

Davis rarely publicized these and often signed the bills, like the measure boosting farmworker organizing, only under pressure. Many progressives know only about Davis's support for prisons, but the record of progressive achievements in California since 1999 is clear. The message is that progressive gains are won when the grassroots are mobilized. This is a lesson worth remembering should America elect Wesley Clark or Howard Dean next year.

RANDY SHAW, *director Housing America/Tenderloin Housing Clinic*

FLASHBACKS

Lockhart, Tex.

■ Christian Parenti's "Stretched Thin, Lied to & Mistreated" [Oct. 6] is some of the best journalism I have read on the war. It is edgy, detailed and goddamn brilliant. It amazes me that dozens of TV channels are filled with thousands of hours of reporting about this war, and they have failed to tell the story one-tenth as well as Parenti. Damn good job.

TIM BJERKE

Mercer Island, Wash.

■ Your cover story is one of the shittiest things I have seen you do. Criticize Bush, Rummy et al., call our government corrupt and immoral, reveal the inanities of our elected public officials, but never, ever make the job of our military men and women more difficult than it already is. Telling them they have been lied to and mistreated is to ask them to frag their leaders; you are traitors to them and their leaders for engaging in this irresponsible speech.

MICHAEL BOND

Old Greenwich, Conn.

■ "Stretched Thin, Lied to & Mistreated" gave me flashbacks. I am a Vietnam vet. The low morale, the ill-defined mission, a hostile indigenous population, the inadequate training for the war and dangers young soldiers face daily be-

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EDITORIALS

One Year and Counting

There will be a presidential election in a year, and it will come as no surprise that we hope Election Night 2004 ends early with the defeat of George W. Bush. Yes, there are fourteen months left in Bush's term. But he is beyond redemption. He has caused damage that will take years to undo: damage to the environment, damage to the fiscal security of the nation, damage to America's standing in the world. He sabotaged the international regimen established to protect nations from the harmful consequences of global warming. He put the finances of the United States at risk in order to dole out supersized tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. He misled the United States into an elective war that has turned this country into an occupying power (that plans rather poorly) and a symbol of arrogance around the globe. At the same time, he has not acted to address key homeland security needs—such as security at chemical plants and ports—out of an apparent unwillingness to impose regulations on private industry.

Bush claims that the war on terrorism is being won (although according to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, there are no "metrics" for measuring success or failure). But it will be hard—though not impossible—for the White House and the Bush campaign, which will have about $200 million at its disposal, to deploy rhetoric to counter the reality on the ground. Even if Bush (prompted by Karl Rove) decides on accelerated troop withdrawals from Iraq, attacks on Americans, both in that country and elsewhere, are certain to continue, fueled by anger that the invasion of Iraq has exacerbated rather than diminished.

Perhaps less visible will be the long-term harm Bush has done to America's economic security. The President recently hailed the good-news reports of 7.2 percent growth in the gross domestic product. He and others pointed to his tax cuts as the cause. But the tax cuts—coupled with a burst in mortgage refinancing—created a one-time spurt that has yet to produce new jobs. The nation has lost almost 3 million jobs on Bush's watch, most of them in manufacturing, and many are not coming back. Bush has offered nothing to address this structural shift. To keep pace with population growth—put aside recovering lost jobs—the country has to create 150,000 or so new jobs a month. Bush's tax cuts are not up to this task. In fact, mainstream economic analysts predicted that his tax cuts—even if they caused a short-term growth in jobs—would lead to a decline in jobs over time. That's because of the massive debt Bush is bequeathing the nation. Recent analyses conducted by various outfits—the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the Concord Coalition, the Brookings Institution, Goldman Sachs—have projected deficits totaling $5 trillion or more in the next ten years. This debt will put enormous pressure on the federal budget, squeezing out money for needed social programs and exacerbating the fiscal challenges posed by Social Security and Medicare. Bush and his aides argue that economic growth will neutralize this debt. But this is the same bunch that said their first round of tax cuts would not lead to a deficit—which was precisely what happened. As with matters of national security, the Bush crowd, which has repeatedly misrepresented the details and benefits of the tax cuts, deserves no trust.

Bush flaunts American might overseas. He recklessly misguides the economy at home. All those Americans who are aghast at what he has already done to the nation (and the world) and who fear what he might do in another term have less than a year to mount an effective opposition. It is truly a fight for the future of the United States.

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COMMENT

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The Activist Primary

ELECTION MATTERS

A day before the International Committee of the Red Cross announced it would reduce its presence in Iraq because the country was becoming increasingly dangerous, President Bush said he would run for re-election in 2004 on the theme that "the world is more peaceful and more free under my leadership." While the irony may have been lost on Bush, it was not missed by the nine Democratic presidential candidates, every one of whom would be more than happy to debate the President's claim as the party's nominee. It is a measure of their belief that Bush, who seemed so invincible in March of 2003, will be vulnerable in November of 2004 that they are now attacking one another almost as frequently as they condemn the President's international and domestic policies. The exchanges got so hot in the October 26 debate that after Carol Moseley Braun was told that she and Dennis Kucinich had not been asked any questions in the first round because there were so many dust-ups between the other candidates, the former senator drew laughs by exclaiming that it wasn't fair to neglect the two of them "just because nobody's mad at us."

Most of the potshots are aimed at Howard Dean, who, with one year to go before the election, has positioned himself as the candidate who most wants to get in the ring with Bush. Dean's opposition to the war in Iraq won the once-obscure candidate the attention of Democratic activists, but it is his unrelenting assault on the President, his aides and their policies that has won him front-runner status as the start of the caucus and primary season approaches. But Dean's still got a ways to go before he locks the nomination up, and his opponents are busy trying to trip him up with charges that he is either an unelectable liberal or a closet conservative. Wesley Clark and Dick Gephardt are emerging as the candidates best positioned to threaten Dean. While Clark still gets the headlines, the distinct dynamics of the 2004 race could end up making it a Gephardt-Dean race.

Unlike 1992, when Democrats went looking for a candidate with the right style to take on the first George Bush, the 2004 contest is not shaping up as what former Clinton aide Dick Morris calls an "image primary." Rather, the fast-and-furious competition that will begin in mid-January appears set to be an "activist primary," in which voters are looking for a candidate who mirrors their fierce disdain for Bush and their faith that only a Democratic Party that clearly distinguishes itself from the GOP will have a chance to energize the base that is needed to win. Despite his hapless start as a candidate, Clark might win an image primary. His debate performances are less than stellar, but he is getting sounder on the stump, especially when he bangs Bush's management of the war and says Dick Cheney's former company Halliburton should "redeploy to Houston." He's still running strongly in national polls, but those polls won't decide the nomination race; it will play out state by state on battlefields for which the general's training has not prepared him.

The handheld-to-handheld combat of the Internet age plays to Dean's strengths, and his campaign has built a web commu-

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COMMENT

nity that extends not just to all fifty states but down to the county level in early caucus and primary states. And Dean's fundraising juggernaut has given him the resources to stay competitive long after other candidates have emptied their treasuries. No other campaign can match Dean's nationwide network, or his financial muscle. Already, Clark and Joe Lieberman have made the politically embarrassing decision to skip Iowa, and John Edwards—who has spent close to $1 million to little avail in the first caucus state—is struggling to stay in the game not just there but in New Hampshire. John Kerry, the early favorite of much of the party establishment, has to hold his own in Iowa and win New Hampshire, both of which are starting to look like tall orders for the tall guy.

That leaves the anything-but-flashy Gephardt as the candidate who may be best positioned to compete effectively with Dean's high-tech campaign. If Dean is surfing the new wave, Gephardt is surfing the New Deal. In his must-win state of Iowa, where the Democratic demographic skews old, Gephardt has reclaimed the lead on the strength of a campaign that savages Dean for talk about tinkering with Social Security and Medicare. Dean screams "scare tactics," but scare tactics work; Gephardt has regained his lead in the Iowa polls. And Gephardt is about to get a big boost from the twenty international unions that are developing a coordinated campaign to get their 54,000 Iowa members out for the former House minority leader—a consequential contribution in a state where the caucuses draw only about 100,000 voters. If they secure Iowa for Gephardt, those unions will replicate the campaign in other states.

If Gephardt wins Iowa and Dean bests Kerry and Clark in New Hampshire, both candidates know they will be in a race to expand their base. To that end, they're competing hard to win the favor of African-American voters, who will play a decisive role in the industrial and Southern state primaries that pack the calendar between February 3 and March 2. Gephardt is betting that the unions that back him, many of which have substantial African-American memberships, will give him an edge. He is fighting rough, charging that Dean's comment that he wanted to be "the candidate for guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks" represents a break with the party's civil rights commitment. The effect of that criticism, echoed by several other contenders, remains to be seen. Dean, who has been accused of running a white-bread campaign, trumped the other candidates in late October when Illinois Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. said he planned to endorse him. Of all Dean's endorsements, Jackson's could be the most important, a reality underscored by an angry Al Sharpton's charge that "any so-called African-American leader that would endorse Dean despite his anti-black record is mortgaging the future of our struggle for civil rights and social justice." Sharpton's smart; he recognizes the new dynamic that comes into play when Dean combines his angry white liberal base with African-American votes. Indeed, if Jackson hits the trail hard for Dean, and if the candidate scores an endorsement from the Service Employees International Union, a 1.6-million-member organization with a huge African-American membership that appears to be leaning toward the Vermonter, Dean could be positioned to parlay the upper hand he has already secured into a winning hand.

JOHN NICHOLS

The Struggle for Russia

The arrest last month of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the principal owner of Russia's biggest oil company, Yukos, and the richest of the country's seventeen state-anointed billionaire oligarchs, on charges of fraud and tax evasion has put Russia back in the forefront of US media attention. But is the story being reported the full, or essential, one?

It's being told as follows. Although Khodorkovsky, like all of Russia's "wealthy businessmen," acquired his company (currently valued at roughly $45 billion) at little if any cost to himself through "murky" insider dealings in the 1990s, when the enormous natural resources of the former Soviet state were being privatized under then-President Boris Yeltsin, he has since transformed Yukos into a model for a new capitalist, democratic Russia—"transparent," exceedingly profitable, even philanthropic. So much so that it has helped fuel a Russian "economic rebound" while becoming a potential source of oil for the United States.

Unlike other, less "clean" oligarchs, the story continues, Khodorkovsky is being persecuted by President Vladimir Putin chiefly because the oil baron became active in Russia's democratic politics, funding opposition parties in next month's parliamentary elections and even aspiring to the presidency. To crush Khodorkovsky and make an example of him, Putin is relying on a Kremlin faction he has recruited largely from the KGB, where he began his own career, which wants Yukos's wealth for itself. The result will therefore be a grievous blow to Russia's "booming economy" and democracy, replacing free-market-oriented "liberal oligarchs" with much worse and less efficient ones and driving away needed foreign investment.

Some elements of this story, which relies very heavily on Moscow sources associated with the "liberal oligarchs," are plausible, but others are not. Democracy in Russia has been failing ever since Yeltsin made oligarchical privatization possible by destroying an elected parliament in 1993, and neither side is interested in truly reviving it; the oligarchs are zealous monopolists, not free-market reformers, and Western investors interested in Russia's huge oil reserves have already indicated that they care about official guarantees of the contracts, not who signs them; Putin now controls elections sufficiently to get substantially the legislature he wants; and no one of Jewish origin, as are Khodorkovsky and most of the other oligarchs, can be elected president of Russia. Above all, however, the prevailing media account omits the essential background and context.

Privatization—or "piratization," as it is often called in Russia—did not take place in an economic or social vacuum. It was accompanied in the 1990s by the worst economic depression of modern times and the impoverishment of a great many Russians, probably the majority of them. In the process, it created the oligarchical economic system that exists today. In 2000, Yeltsin-era oligarchs, fearfully aware that they were loathed by most Russians—they still refer to them contemptuously as a "Communist populace"—and that they lacked any real legal legitimacy, put Putin in the Kremlin to be a praetorian president safeguarding the system, its creators and its beneficiaries in business, politics,

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the media and even intellectual circles.

Various motives are behind the Khodorkovsky affair, but none would matter if that system had not failed to alleviate Russia's most profound problems. After a decade, and despite a purported "economic boom"—really little more than a bubble inflated by high world oil prices—most of the country's essential industrial, agricultural and social infrastructure is still starved for investment and disintegrating. The human toll continues to grow in the form of more poverty, disease, crime, premature deaths and homeless children. From the vast provinces beyond "booming" Moscow, one hears persistent reports that "Russia is dying." And indeed, the population is shrinking by nearly a million people a year.

That ongoing human tragedy is what is mainly missing from the US media story, where poverty and the plight of most Russians are hardly ever mentioned. Even if some accounts of Russia's crisis are overstated, the only solution is a new economic course that uses the oligarchs' enormous profits from the country's natural resources to rescue and develop the rest of the nation, though not even its advocates agree on how to do it. Some suggest deprivatization and state direction; others advocate redistribution of assets to new owners; and still others call for a punitive compensatory tax on today's oligarchs followed by amnesty. For now, however, most of those profits—hundreds of billions of dollars after minimal tax payments and modest investment in the Soviet-built energy sector—are not "transparent," having fled or been left abroad.

Though Khodorkovsky does not deserve to be singled out for such severe treatment, and may even gain some public sympathy, his arrest makes clear that the struggle over the oligarchical system, and thus once again the future of post-Soviet Russia, is under way. Putin has already deposed one of the two highest-ranking political representatives of the Yeltsin-era oligarchs, Kremlin chief of staff Aleksandr Voloshin, and Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov may follow. Agents of the oligarchs are striking back, threatening to use *kompromat*—personally damaging information—against Putin himself and trying to frighten the Russian people into believing that he will also deprivatize the apartments they were given in the 1990s.

It is impossible to foresee the outcome of the unfolding struggle. The result may be, in the tradition of Russian leadership succession, a far-reaching de-Yeltsinization of the post-Soviet system. And, of course, it may be an even worse system, also a Russian tradition. But for the majority of Russians, as opinion surveys outside Moscow seem to indicate, there is the hope, realistic or not, that Putin is finally turning against his creators and preparing to become, as even a KGB general remarked privately, "Vladimir the Savior."

Whatever the case, it is a struggle that Russia must decide, not the United States, which is already too deeply involved. Many Russians remember the Clinton Administration's complicity in the formation of the oligarchical system, when it applauded Yeltsin's privatization deals as "reform," and they understand that today's self-interested oligarchs stand behind the uncritical pro–United States faction in Kremlin politics. They also know about Khodorkovsky's personal relations with the Bush White House, which is intervening on his behalf. Indeed, his arrest and the freezing of his shares may have been precipitated by his intention to sell a large equity share of Yukos to an American oil giant, thereby putting a significant portion of Russia's present and future wealth beyond the country's control.

The widespread impression that America is a leading supporter of the hated oligarchical system cannot be good for future US-Russian relations. Nor can it be good for international security. The world's largest territorial country and still its other nuclear super-repository will never be truly stable, as we are witnessing again today, until a system based on plunder and poverty is replaced by one capable of producing real economic development and more social justice.

STEPHEN F. COHEN

Stephen F. Cohen, professor of Russian studies and history at New York University, is the author, most recently, of Failed Crusade: America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia *(Norton).*

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California Burning

The 52nd Congressional District of California, where I grew up, encompasses the eastern suburbs of San Diego as well as a vast hinterland of granite-bouldered mountains and almost impenetrable manzanita chaparral. In recent years this picturesque back country has been a magnet for trophy homes, luxury estates and horse ranches. Its older, Ozark-like culture of modest

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Letter From London

by Honor Moore

Early on the crisp morning of October 15, the archbishops of thirty-seven of the thirty-eight provinces of the Anglican Communion (known as primates) gathered in closed session at Lambeth Palace for two days of meetings. The unusual conference was called by Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury and spiritual leader of 70 million Anglicans worldwide. Williams acted after conservative provinces in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean—the "global South"—and the vocal, well-organized conservative minority of the American Episcopal Church (the US Anglican Church) threatened schism this past summer in response to the election of Gene Robinson, an openly gay priest, as Episcopal Bishop of New Hampshire, and the decision of the Canadian Diocese of New Westminster to bless same-sex unions.

"I cannot think of how a man in his senses would be having a sexual relationship with another man. Even in the world of animals, dogs, cows, lions, we don't hear of such things," Archbishop Peter Akinola of Nigeria told the Lagos-based *Guardian* newspaper in an interview that was widely quoted in the British press. "When we sit down globally as a communion, I am going to sit in a meeting with a man who is marrying a fellow man.... I cannot see myself doing it."

Feelings were so intense and press coverage so relentless that the purple-and-black-clad archbishops were bused secretly from their Brixton hotel and ushered through a back gate into the turreted palace, as police stood at yellow barricades set up at its grand entrance on the Thames.

At 11 that morning in the three Anglican churches closest to Lambeth, progressive church members worshiped at services organized by www.inclusivechurch.net, formed this past summer out of the widespread sense of despair and betrayal prompted by Archbishop Williams's July turnaround on the appointment of Jeffrey John, an openly gay but celibate priest, as Suffragan Bishop of Reading. At the inclusive church service at St. Matthew's, Westminster, the celebrant and preacher was Walter Makhulu, the former Archbishop of Central Africa. "This is a service of worship, not protest," he declared in a resonant bass, his consonants reverberating as he described registering for apartheid with his parents as a child in South Africa—measurement of the width of his nose, scrutiny of the texture of his hair, categorization of his skin color. "Afterward, it was concluded that we were among those who did not merit the privileges of humanity," he said, then forcefully denounced those who oppose the consecration of Robinson and the Canadian same-sex blessings. "The notion of an exclusive church is abhorrent to me," he said. "It is a heresy just as apartheid was."

Like Desmond Tutu, Makhulu pursued progressive policies when he was archbishop. The split between the generally conservative evangelicals and the generally liberal Anglicans goes back more than a hundred years, to a colonial moment when two Church of England missionary organizations divided the African continent. The more liberal Society for the Propagation of the Gospel took on South Africa, while the evangelical Church Mission Society took responsibility for West Africa, including Nigeria, where there are 17.5 million practicing Anglicans—compared with 2.3 million Episcopalians in the United States and 3.6 million who actually attend church in England, where Anglicanism is the state church.

Until now the Anglicans' historical flexibility has allowed diverse thinking regarding sexuality and gender relations, but in the past decade this traditional pluralism has come under attack from the right. As Kendall Harmon, canon theologian of the Diocese of South Carolina, chillingly put it, "In my opinion there is just too much Rodney King theology—you know, Can't we all just get along?" In the 1990s conservative and reactionary forces in the United States began to make common cause with conservative Anglicans in the global South. When dissident conservative bishops met in Dallas October 7–9 to strategize about the Lambeth meeting, they were organized by the conservative American Anglican Council and partly underwritten by Howard Ahmanson, the far-right California banking heir. The council shares office space in Washington with the Institute on Religion and Democracy, which received $3.8 million in grants from conservative foundations between 1985 and 2002, including $1.7 million from foundations run by Richard Mellon Scaife.

The alliance of US conservative Anglican money and know-how and African evangelical numbers had its first major victory in 1998, at the once-a-decade Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops, when a resolution was passed upholding "faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and [stating] that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage."

At the recent London meeting, the primates threw bones to each side. The Episcopal Church was not expelled from the Anglican Communion, but American conservatives were guaranteed oversight by theologically sympathetic bishops, thus setting the ground for the formation of a separate conservative province, a move that would be a radical departure from traditional Anglicanism. Though the statement called for up to a year of reflection, the morning after it was issued Rowan Williams again took a realpolitik position. When asked by the BBC's *Today* if he believed Gene Robinson should be a bishop, he said no, adding that it was his calling to keep the Communion together. In sharp contrast, US Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold believes the issue before the church is not homosexuality but "how a community can live in the tension of disagreement."

On November 2, Gene Robinson was consecrated before a joyous congregation of 4,000 in the University of New Hampshire sports arena. And Episcopal conservatives were laying the groundwork for seceding to start their own province. HONOR MOORE

Honor Moore, a poet, is at work on a memoir about her father, the late Bishop Paul Moore of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

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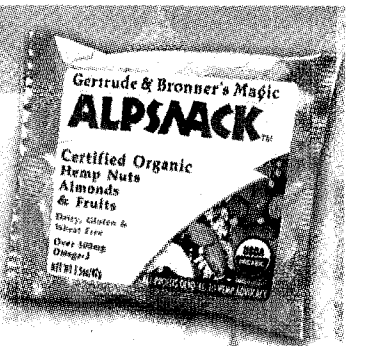

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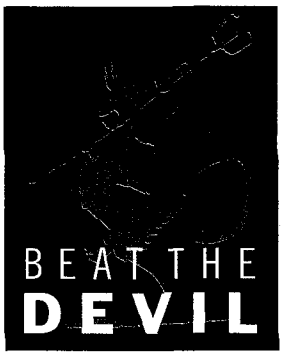
ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Why We Still Need a Third Party



To gauge the level of hatred entertained by liberals for the Bush Administration, take a look at the bestseller lists. Rubbing shoulders in the top tiers we find Michael Moore, Al Franken, Paul Krugman and Molly Ivins all pouring sarcastic rebukes on Bush II and, categorically or by implication, suggesting that in favoring the very rich and looting the economy in their interest, Bush stands in despicable contrast to his immediate predecessor in the Oval Office. So just get a Democrat, any Democrat, back in the White House and the skies will begin to clear again.

But suppose a less forgiving retrospect of the Clinton years discloses that he did nothing to alter the rules of the neoliberal game that began in the Reagan/Thatcher era, with the push to boost after-tax corporate profits, shift ever more bargaining power to business, erode social protections for workers, make the rich richer, the middle tier at best stand still and the poor get poorer.

We now have just such an unsparing scrutiny of Clintonomics, in the form of Robert Pollin's *Contours of Descent: U.S. Economic Fractures and the Landscape of Global Austerity*. Pollin is unambiguous. "It was under Clinton," he points out, "that the distribution of wealth in the U.S. became more skewed than it had been at any time in the previous forty years—with, for example, the ratio of wages for the average worker to the pay of the average CEO rising astronomically from 113 to 1 in 1991 under Bush-1 to 449 to 1 when Clinton left office in 2001." In the world, exclusive of China, between 1980 and 1998 and considering the difference between the richest and poorest 10 percent of humanity, inequality grew by 19 percent; by 77 percent, if you take the richest and poorest 1 percent. Welcome to neoliberalism.

The basic picture? "Under the full eight years of Clinton's presidency, even with the bubble ratcheting up both business investment and consumption by the rich...average real wages remained at a level 10 percent below that of the Nixon/Ford peak period, even though productivity in the economy was 50 percent higher under Clinton than [under] Nixon and Ford. The poverty rate through Clinton's term was only slightly better than the dismal performance attained during the Reagan/Bush years." We had a bubble boom, pushed along by consumer spending by the rich.

To be sure, in accord with the captious laws of class-based mechanics, the bubbling tide did raise boats, albeit unevenly. The yachts of the rich lofted magnificently on the flood. Meaner skiffs rose an inch or two. In those years businesses needed more workers, and for a brief moment the labor shortage gave them some leverage to get more pay.

At the end of eight years, when the bubble tide had ebbed, what did workers have by way of a permanent legacy? Clinton, Pollin bleakly concludes, "accomplished almost nothing in the way of labor laws or the broader policy environment to improve the bargaining situation for workers.... Moreover, conditions under Clinton worsened among those officially counted as poor."

Nowhere is Pollin more persuasive than in analyzing the causes of the fiscal turnaround from deficit to surplus. Was it the consequence of economic growth (producing higher tax revenues), plus the moderate rise in marginal tax rates on the rich in 1993? If indeed these were the causes of fiscal virtue, we might take a more benign view of Clinton's fiscal policies. On the other hand, if surplus was achieved by dint of hacking away at social expenditures and social safety nets, plus by increases in capital gains tax revenues stemming from the stock-market bubble, then progressives might not so eagerly extol the Clinton model.

In a piece of original and trenchant analysis Pollin shows that almost two-thirds of Clinton's fiscal turnaround can be accounted for by slashes in government spending relative to GDP (54 percent) and by capital gains revenues (10 percent). Pollin then asks the question, Suppose there really had been a peace dividend after the end of the cold war? And he gives a partial answer. We could have had fewer weapons systems, 100,000 new teachers, 560,000 more scholarships, 1,400 new high schools and still had a budget surplus of $220 billion. Wall Street applauded the surpluses and the ordinary folk paid the costs of all those slashes in the budget, including fewer teachers, a dirtier environment.

You think the next Democratic nominee is going to address the horrors engendered by the neoliberal credo to which Clinton paid such fealty? Of course not. What, at minimum, would have to be done? Pollin doesn't shirk the questions, and he offers answers that steer past easy rhetorical flourishes about trade protections. If we are to move toward a world in which families don't have to line up outside churches to stay alive and teenagers don't have to work for 20 cents a day in Third World sweatshops, we have to have policies here that promote full employment (remember the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill of the 1970s?) and income security.

Such policies would have to include strengthening workers' legal rights to organize and form unions, and to fight on a level playing field in the conduct of strikes. To get a measure of fairness and stability in the financial system, financial institutions would have to honor asset-based reserve requirements; one example would be the margin requirements Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan failed to impose in 1996. Banks could also be required to channel credit to socially beneficial projects such as low-income housing.

Despite the best efforts of our doctrinal leaders, the moral sentiments of the people are not entirely corrupted. Consumers, for example, are prepared to pay a premium if they can be assured they are buying products not made in sweatshops. And Third World countries need not survive only under the sweatshop conditions ("tremendous good news") praised by Krugman and his colleague at the *Times*, Nicholas Kristof. They have to be permitted to return to the somewhat protected conditions encouraged in the development policies of an earlier era, without agencies of the US government decreeing that their reformers and their union organizers be murdered by death squads.

I'm sorry, but you won't be hearing these ideas from Howard Dean. ■

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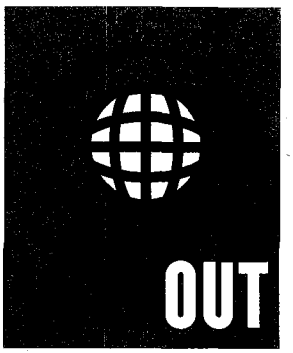
NAOMI KLEIN

Bring Halliburton Home



Cancel the contracts. Ditch the deals. Rip up the rules.

Those are a few suggestions for slogans that could help unify the growing movement against the occupation of Iraq. So far, activist debates have focused on whether the demand should be for a complete withdrawal of troops, or for the United States to cede power to the United Nations.

But the "Troops Out" debate overlooks an important fact. If every last soldier pulled out of the Gulf tomorrow and a sovereign government came to power, Iraq would still be occupied: by laws written in the interest of another country, by foreign corporations controlling its essential services, by 70 percent unemployment sparked by public sector layoffs.

Any movement serious about Iraqi self-determination must call not only for an end to Iraq's military occupation, but to its economic colonization as well. That means reversing the shock therapy reforms that US occupation chief Paul Bremer has fraudulently passed off as "reconstruction" and canceling all privatization contracts flowing from these reforms.

How can such an ambitious goal be achieved? Easy: by showing that Bremer's reforms were illegal to begin with. They clearly violate the international convention governing the behavior of occupying forces, the Hague Regulations of 1907 (the companion to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, both ratified by the United States), as well as the US Army's own code of war.

The Hague Regulations state that an occupying power must respect "unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country." The Coalition Provisional Authority has shredded that simple rule with gleeful defiance. Iraq's Constitution outlaws the privatization of key state assets, and it bars foreigners from owning Iraqi firms. No plausible argument can be made that the CPA was "absolutely prevented" from respecting those laws, and yet two months ago, the CPA overturned them unilaterally.

On September 19, Bremer enacted the now-infamous Order 39. It announced that 200 Iraqi state companies would be privatized; decreed that foreign firms can retain 100 percent ownership of Iraqi banks, mines and factories; and allowed these firms to move 100 percent of their profits out of Iraq. *The Economist* declared the new rules a "capitalist dream."

Order 39 violated the Hague Regulations in other ways as well. The convention states that occupying powers "shall be regarded only as administrator and usufructuary of public buildings, real estate, forests, and agricultural estates belonging to the hostile State, and situated in the occupied country. It must safeguard the capital of these properties, and administer them in accordance with the rules of usufruct."

Bouvier's Law Dictionary defines "usufruct" (possibly the ugliest word in the English language) as an arrangement that grants one party the right to use and derive benefit from another's property "without altering the substance of the thing." Put more simply, if you are a housesitter, you can eat the food in the fridge, but you can't sell the house and turn it into condos. And yet that is just what Bremer is doing: What could more substantially alter "the substance" of a public asset than to turn it into a private one?

In case the CPA was still unclear on this detail, the US Army's Law of Land Warfare states that "the occupant does not have the right of sale or unqualified use of [nonmilitary] property." This is pretty straightforward: Bombing something does not give you the right to sell it. There is every indication that the CPA is well aware of the lawlessness of its privatization scheme. In a leaked memo written on March 26, British Attorney General Lord Peter Goldsmith warned Prime Minister Tony Blair that "the imposition of major structural economic reforms would not be authorized by international law."

So far, most of the controversy surrounding Iraq's reconstruction has focused on the waste and corruption in the awarding of contracts. This badly misses the scope of the violation: Even if the selloff of Iraq were conducted with full transparency and open bidding, it would still be illegal for the simple reason that Iraq is not America's to sell.

The Security Council's recognition of the United States and Britain's occupation authority provides no legal cover. The UN resolution passed in May specifically required the occupying powers to "comply fully with their obligations under international law including in particular the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Hague Regulations of 1907."

According to a growing number of international legal experts, this means that if the next Iraqi government decides it doesn't want to be a wholly owned subsidiary of Bechtel or Halliburton, it will have powerful legal grounds to renationalize assets that were privatized under CPA edicts. Juliet Blanch, global head of energy and international arbitration for the huge international law firm Norton Rose, says that because Bremer's reforms directly contradict Iraq's Constitution, they are "in breach of international law and are likely not enforceable." Blanch argues that the CPA "has no authority or ability to sign those [privatization] contracts" and that a sovereign Iraqi government would have "quite a serious argument for renationalization without paying compensation." Firms facing this type of expropriation would, according to Blanch, have "no legal remedy."

The only way out for the Administration is to make sure that Iraq's next government is anything but sovereign. It must be pliant enough to ratify the CPA's illegal laws, which will then be celebrated as the happy marriage of free markets and free people. Once that happens, it will be too late: The contracts will be locked in, the deals done and the occupation of Iraq permanent.

Which is why antiwar forces must use this fast-closing window to demand that the next Iraqi government be free from the shackles of these reforms. It's too late to stop the war, but it's not too late to deny Iraq's invaders the myriad economic prizes they went to war to collect in the first place.

It's not too late to cancel the contracts and ditch the deals. ■

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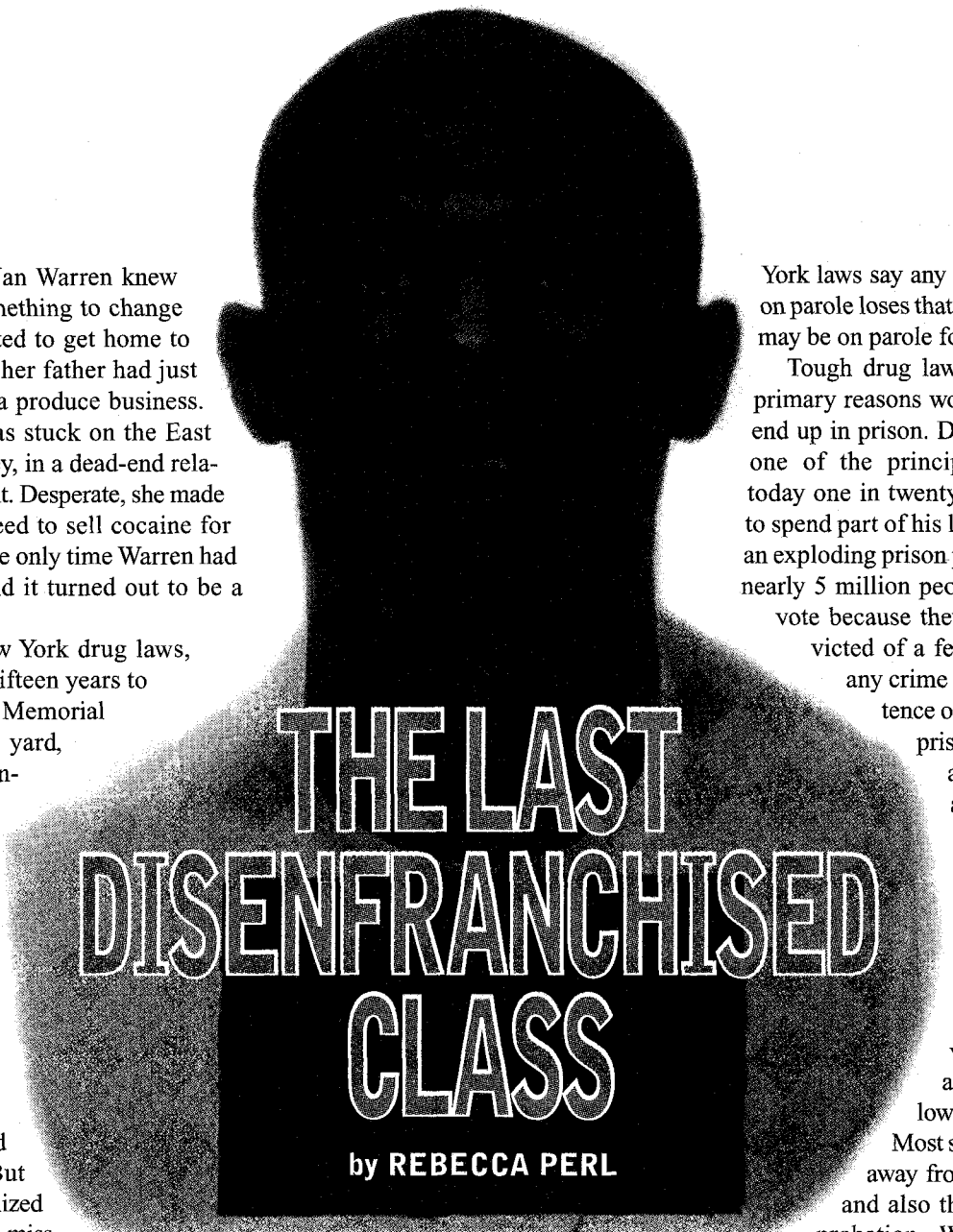

THE LAST DISENFRANCHISED CLASS

by REBECCA PERL

It was 1986, and Jan Warren knew she had to do something to change her life. She wanted to get home to California where her father had just died and left her a produce business. But Warren, 35, was stuck on the East Coast with no money, in a dead-end relationship and pregnant. Desperate, she made a mistake: She agreed to sell cocaine for her cousin. It was the only time Warren had ever sold drugs, and it turned out to be a police sting.

Under strict New York drug laws, Warren was given fifteen years to life. And one sunny Memorial Day in the prison yard, Warren suddenly understood that serving time in prison was going to cost her more than her physical freedom. "I knew people who had died in the wars. I thought of them on Memorial Day—that's what you were supposed to do," said Warren, now 52. "But on that holiday, I realized that something was missing. It was the American flag. It was gone. I couldn't see it. And that should have been my first clue. If you saw the flag you might think of yourself as a citizen with certain inalienable rights, and the truth is, that's wrong."

Warren added, "I didn't realize that part of the whole prison system is set up to alienate you from society, because now I can't vote. And without being able to vote, what politician is going to say, 'Well, Ms. Warren, you have a very good point and because you're one of my constituents I'm going to listen to you'?"

Eventually Warren, a registered Republican, wrote to New York Governor George Pataki after serving six years, and she was later granted clemency—but still not the right to vote. New York laws say any felon in prison or on parole loses that right, and Warren may be on parole for life.

Tough drug laws are one of the primary reasons women like Warren end up in prison. Drug laws are also one of the principal reasons that today one in twenty men can expect to spend part of his life in prison. And an exploding prison population means nearly 5 million people are unable to vote because they have been convicted of a felony—defined as any crime that carries a sentence of a year or more in prison. Today felons and former felons are the single largest group currently barred by law from voting in the United States.

Voting rights are left up to the states, so the laws vary. Only Maine and Vermont allow prisoners to vote. Most states take the right away from those in prison and also those on parole or probation. While most states also return the right to vote once the terms of a sentence have been completed, thirteen states, five of them in the South, take voting rights away for life—a punishment extremely rare in the rest of the Western world. As a result, there are now more ex-prisoners than prisoners in the United States who can't vote.

Civil rights advocates predict that voting rights for prisoners and ex-prisoners will be the next US suffrage movement, as lawyers, prison advocates, voting rights groups and foundations have recently begun to join forces and take up the cause. "The United States, this great democracy, was founded as this experiment, and it was a great experiment. But it was a very limited one

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as well," says Marc Mauer of the Sentencing Project, a prison advocacy group in Washington, DC. "At the time the country was founded, essentially a group of wealthy white men granted themselves the right to vote." Mauer says that today, we look back on that decision with some degree of national embarrassment, and our history since then has been one of trying to open the franchise.

But if history offers any lessons, it won't be an easy fight or a quick one. That's because, according to some sociologists who study disenfranchisement, the removal of barriers for felons could affect the political balance of power in this country. For one thing, felons who get the chance vote overwhelmingly Democratic, and with a Republican administration in power, there is little chance for change on a national scale.

Disenfranchisement laws can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome. In Renaissance Europe, people who committed certain crimes were condemned to a "civil death," and lost their civil rights. In the United States, many states passed disenfranchisement laws in the years just after Reconstruction, when blacks were first gaining the right to vote. At the time lawmakers justified the laws by invoking what one Alabama politician called the "menace of negro domination." "This was at the exact same historical period when poll taxes and literacy requirements were being adopted by many Southern legislatures," says Mauer. "All with the express purpose of disenfranchising black voters, so that one Southern legislator at the time referred to the felon disenfranchisement laws as almost an insurance policy." Today the laws are justified on race-neutral grounds, but their discriminatory impact remains.

US laws are out of sync with those of much of the world. In South Africa, prisoners helped to elect one of their own—Nelson Mandela.

Also, American laws seem to be out of sync with those of other countries in their severity. Prisoners never lose their right to vote in eighteen countries across Europe, including Ireland, Spain, Switzerland and Poland. In South Africa, prisoners helped to elect one of their own—Nelson Mandela. And last year the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that denying prisoners the vote is "antidemocratic" and "denies the basis of democratic legitimacy."

In the United States the laws affect large numbers of people, and black people in particular. Across the country, one in eight African-American men is barred from voting. In Florida and Alabama, it's one in three. Sometimes felon disenfranchisement laws take the vote away from whole communities. In New York State, 90 percent of prisoners serve their time upstate, yet overwhelmingly these prisoners come from just seven poor, minority neighborhoods in New York City.

Jazz Hayden is from one of those neighborhoods: Harlem. He's one of 131,000 prisoners or parolees in New York State who can't vote because of a felony conviction. As Hayden explains it, just about everyone in Harlem has a brother or a nephew or a cousin who's locked up. Though blacks make up only 15 percent of the state population, they make up more than half the prison population—a situation that is repeated across the country. Because whites are more likely to be offered plea bargains and alternative sentences, they are less likely to spend time in prison and lose the right to vote, according to the New York Civil Liberties Union.

In the 1970s Hayden prospered in Harlem. He owned a nightclub and a building on the block where he grew up. But in summer 1987, Hayden was arrested for stabbing and killing a sanitation worker during a fight and was sentenced to prison, where he spent the next thirteen years. There, Hayden had a lot of time to think and read. He got a master's degree in theology. He also filed a lawsuit against the state on behalf of prisoners in New York. "The vote in America represents power because come Election Day, when I go to the voting booth and Bill Gates goes to the voting booth all of us have one vote," he says. "George Bush, Bill Gates and myself—and it's probably the only time in America that we're all equal. And to deny me that right is to say that I'm not a citizen. I'm right back in the same situation that my ancestors were in."

Today the NAACP Legal Defense Fund has taken the lead on challenging the voting restriction in court. It reviewed the suit Hayden filed in prison and expanded its scope; in January Hayden's suit became *Hayden v. Pataki*, a class action on behalf of black and Latino prisoners and parolees in New York, and the handful of communities they come from. The suit charges that the law is discriminatory and unconstitutional. "This really shouldn't be viewed any differently than any other struggle for suffrage in this country," says Janai Nelson, a lawyer on the case. "We excluded women from voting for a long time. We excluded non–property holders, we excluded other minorities, despite the fact that this is really the bedrock of our democracy."

But not everyone buys Nelson's argument. That includes many crime victims and their relatives. "I don't want these people having access to making changes in my life; they have already done that," says Janice Grieshaber, whose daughter Jenna was murdered in Albany in 1997 one week before she was to graduate from nursing school. Grieshaber says it's really pretty simple: People who don't follow the laws shouldn't have a say in making them.

Yet even Grieshaber makes a distinction between the rights of violent and nonviolent criminals. As she sees it, someone locked up because of drugs or a white-collar crime is a more sympathetic figure than, say, someone convicted of manslaughter. And some politicians and criminologists agree. Chris Uggen, a sociologist at the University of Minnesota who studies felon disenfranchisement, says those fighting for felons' right to vote would have a better chance of success if they focused on nonviolent criminals. But Nelson remains unswayed. "This is what it means to be an

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This article is based on reporting done by Rebecca Perl, an associate of the Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR), for Whose Vote Counts?, *a radio documentary produced by CIR and American RadioWorks, the national documentary unit of Minnesota Public Radio. The documentary was set to air the first week of November on stations around the country as part of the 2003 public radio collaboration, "Whose Democracy Is It?" A related article is available at www.thenation.com. For more information about disenfranchisement and other subjects related to voting, or to hear the radio piece online, go to www.americanradioworks.org.*

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American," she says. "Regardless of whether or not you're a good American, a law-abiding American, a PC American, really the right to vote does not vary based on our different ideas about what we would ideally like you to be as a person in this country."

Others remain more pragmatic. Legislation introduced by Congressman John Conyers, a Michigan Democrat, seeks (so far unsuccessfully) to grant the vote to ex-prisoners. An election reform commission on which sit former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, set up after the Florida debacle in 2000, made a similar suggestion. "A strong case can be made in favor of restoration of voting rights when an individual has completed the full sentence...including any period of probation or parole," reads their 2001 report. Senator Harry Reid, a Nevada Democrat, tried to make Carter's suggestion a reality when he offered an amendment to an election reform package passed last year. The amendment failed.

Nevertheless, most Americans are in favor of such a move; a poll taken last year showed that 80 percent of Americans support restoring the vote to ex-felons who have completed their sentences.

Chris Uggen found that had felons been allowed to vote in the last presidential election, hanging chads would have never been an issue. Uggen looked at the closely contested 2000 election and discovered that had felons had the vote, Al Gore would have likely won the popular vote by more than a million votes. In Florida alone, Gore would have picked up 60,000–80,000 votes—enough to swamp the narrow victory margin declared for George Bush. Uggen also found that had felons—even just those who had completed their sentences—voted over the past couple of decades, races across the country might have looked very different. One critical difference could have been control of the US Senate. Republicans including John Warner of Virginia and Mitch McConnell of Kentucky would likely have lost in past elections, according to Uggen, which may be part of the reason Senator McConnell told his senatorial colleagues when Reid's amendment was being debated on the floor: "We are talking about rapists and murderers, robbers and even terrorists or spies."

For their part, Democrats in Congress have not rushed to champion the issue. Appearing soft on crime might cost Democrats more votes than they would gain, suggests Uggen. Also, felons are a constituency that can't exactly fill Democratic coffers, say Washington insiders, so they don't get a lot of attention. Janai Nelson of the legal defense fund says that when it comes to expanding the franchise, those in power are content with the status quo. "They are already successful. They've made their way into office and they've relied on the political system as it exists, and very few people want to rock the boat and bring in a new constituency that they may not be familiar with," she says.

At an NAACP candidate forum this summer, presidential candidates John Kerry, Bob Graham, Howard Dean, Carol Moseley Braun, John Edwards and Al Sharpton said they supported restoring the right to vote to ex-felons, though Edwards and Graham voted against Reid's amendment last year. (Kerry voted for it.) Joseph Lieberman, who did not attend, did support Reid. In 2003, Dennis Kucinich, who was not at the forum, co-sponsored a similar bill by John Conyers in the House calling for ex-felons to be allowed to vote. Dick Gephardt favors leaving the issue to the states.

For her part, Jan Warren wonders: What happened to rehabilitation? And what about the women she met in prison who struck out in self-defense against violent husbands and rapists? Or those who were wrongly convicted? In January, then–Illinois Governor George Ryan pardoned Madison Hobley, who spent thirteen years on death row for murder. At a nationally televised press conference, the governor said Hobley and three other death-row inmates were wrongly prosecuted, and called the system that convicted them "wildly inaccurate, unjust...and, at times, a very racist system."

When it was Hobley's chance to speak, it wasn't the fact that his life was spared that he wanted to talk about. "I said I can't wait to vote again, it was the first thing I wanted to do," said Hobley. "Two weeks after I got out I made sure to get my voter's registration card, and all the officials that turned their head on me, now I've got a chance to get back at them and vote them out."

History is a slow process, but time seems to be on the side of expanding the franchise. "It will be a decades-long struggle but it has the potential to be decade-defining for those members of society who are the most stigmatized and the most invisible," says Robin Templeton, who is now directing an effort in New York, Maryland, Texas, Alabama and Florida focused on restoring voting rights to prisoners. In recent years, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and New Mexico have passed less restrictive disenfranchisement laws, and there are legal challenges pending in Florida and Washington State as well as New York. *Hayden v. Pataki* is expected to come to trial in 2005. ■

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NOT ONLY DEMOCRATS BUT MANY GREENS OPPOSE A NADER RUN IN 2004.

Ralph Redux?

MICAH L. SIFRY

With a year to Election Day, Ralph Nader is quietly gearing up for his second serious bid for the presidency. Though he has been telling reporters that he won't make a decision about running until the end of the year, any day now he will announce the formation of a presidential exploratory committee, which will allow him to start raising money and hiring staff. A final decision to go ahead full throttle will probably wait until the winnowing of the Democratic primary field starts in February, as Nader genuinely likes progressive Ohio Congressman Dennis Kucinich and has been supporting his underdog presidential bid.

JEAN HANNON DOUGLAS

In a recent interview, Nader rejected any suggestion that a 2004 run would be hobbled by the legacy of 2000, a startlingly stubborn assertion given how many people, including Democratic Party leaders, grassroots activists, labor and environmental honchos, and liberal pundits, blame him for costing Al Gore the election. He insists that voters he meets rarely raise the issue. In response, he tells people to read Jeffrey Toobin's *Too Close to Call*, which demonstrates in precise detail how Gore and his top advisers made a series of dumb and defeatist choices during the Florida recount showdown, spoiling their chances for a full and accurate vote tally.

With a combination of irritation and amusement, Nader has watched Howard Dean adopt the style, if not the substance, of his 2000 campaign, no doubt aware that a Dean nomination would seriously hamper his ability to gain traction next spring and summer. While he recognizes that many Dean supporters may well have been Naderites in 2000, he calls Dean a "middle of the road" Democrat too friendly to corporate demands, and dismisses progressive enthusiasm for Dean's candidacy with this metaphor: "Everybody is starved. If you have a garden and if it rains, you're not excited, but if you're in the desert and it rains, you're delirious. But you know what rain in the desert produces? A mirage." Repeating an old refrain, he says it doesn't even matter if Dean is for real: "He can't deliver—he can be George McGovern on steroids, but when he gets into the corporate prison called the White House, he can't deliver."

Given how Nader talks about the "corporate Democrats" and their failure to fight President Bush on everything from tax cuts and the Patriot Act to Enron and the Iraq war, the die seems cast for a rerun of his 2000 campaign—except for one critical wrinkle. This time, there's real opposition to his running coming from within the Green Party, and the prospect of an internal primary battle that may hinder or conceivably block Nader from receiving the party's nomination or push him into running as an independent.

"I don't think Ralph Nader should run again," says Elizabeth Horton Sheff, one of the party's slowly increasing number of African-American elected officials. Sheff, the majority leader of the Hartford, Connecticut, city council, adds, "Our message of grassroots inclusion did not get through with this candidate. His appeal is not broad enough to reach my community." (Indeed, Nader only got 1 percent of the African-American vote in 2000, compared with his 3 percent overall. Even in Democratic strongholds like Washington, DC, where Nader reached 5 percent, he only got one in one hundred black votes.) Arguing that Nader reaches mainly progressive and middle-class whites, Sheff insists that the party doesn't even need a presidential candidate, concluding, "We should run someone only if they have a proven track record appealing to a cross section of America."

Larry Barnett, a Green who is the former mayor of Sonoma, California, and a current member of its city council, calls any presidential bid "an ego-centered exercise in futility." He asserts that the party is making steady inroads in local electoral politics that can eventually sustain more serious campaigns for higher office. "In the meantime, wasting its time in races that are unwinnable only detracts from its message, its long-term goals and current accomplishments," he says. Art Goodtimes, a county commissioner in San Miguel, Colorado, who was elected as a Democrat in 1996, switched to Green in 1998 and won re-election with 69 percent of the vote in 2000, strongly agrees: "If we're serious about advancing a national candidate, we have to begin to win at the local levels in numbers far exceeding the mere 175 or so local officials currently calling themselves Green."

Other concerns are being raised by well-known Green activists who want the party to present a united front against Bush's re-election. At the party's national committee meeting in Washington this July, John Rensenbrink, one of its founders, spoke to me with pained intensity as he, to all effects, denounced Nader, whom he had vociferously backed in 2000, for toying with a 2004 run.

"People…are very focused on stopping the right-wing cabal that has taken over the country. Therefore, the focus has to be on defeating Bush. Beyond that, the Green Party needs to project a sense of urgency around saving the country, saving the Constitution, saving the planet." Rensenbrink, the co-editor of *Green Horizon Quarterly* (www.green-horizon.org), a new and lively independent Green journal, added with a sigh, "There's a concern that we'll be deflected from that message because of the baggage Ralph Nader has from 2000. I doubt he can get over 1 percent of the vote. He'll have to spend a lot of time dealing with the 'spoiler' question, unfairly, but that's where it is. I'd add to that that he doesn't want to be a Green, he runs with his coterie rather than party organizers, he doesn't involve local Green leaders and he doesn't

Micah L. Sifry, senior analyst with Public Campaign, is the author of Spoiling for a Fight: Third-Party Politics in America *(Routledge, 2002). The views expressed here are his alone.*

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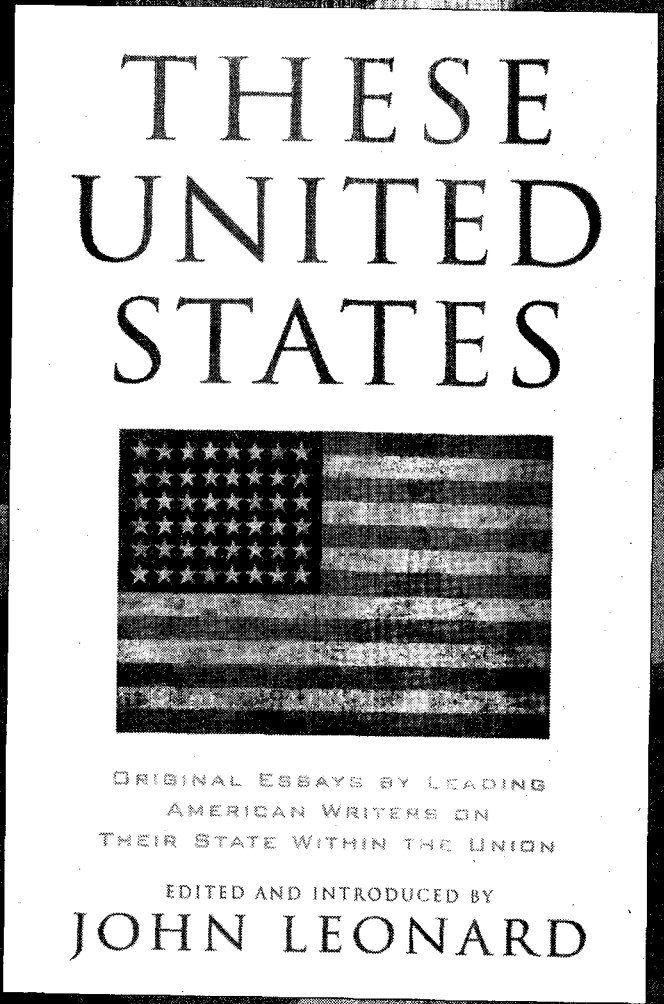

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get the racial issue. I fear if Nader runs, he'll drag down every other Green in this country. I love him, but this is sheer practical politics."

Harsh words, but they're matched by Robert McChesney, co-editor of *Monthly Review*, member of Nader's Citizen Works' Corporate Reform Commission, president of the professors' council of the US Campus Greens since 2001 and a leading media democracy activist. "I don't think Ralph should run," he e-mailed me a few weeks ago. "It would be bad for him personally; I doubt he would get half the number of votes he got in 2000. And it would be bad for the Greens.... Core elements of progressive constituencies, exactly the groups that the Greens need to build upon, will

The Democrat-Green Death Struggle

In 2000, George W. Bush won 48 percent of the national vote, against a combined total of 52 percent for Al Gore and Ralph Nader. Can Democrats and Greens figure out how to play the politics of addition, rather than subtraction, in 2004?

Right now, the prospects for any kind of modus vivendi are grim. All over the country, Democrats have been trying, with little success, to drive the Greens out of existence. In Maine, the Democrat-controlled legislature drew new district lines to deprive State Representative John Eder, who was elected as a Green in 2002, of his seat. They've done the same thing to Green city councilors in Minneapolis. In several locales, they've rebuffed efforts to enact instant-runoff voting, which would take away the Greens' ability to "spoil" races, and instead tried to make it harder for Greens to retain their ballot status without running candidates for offices like President or governor. In San Francisco, where the Green Party's Matt Gonzalez is the popular president of the city's board of supervisors and made it into this fall's mayoral race, the Democratic county central committee actually issued an edict forbidding party clubs from endorsing non-Democrats in local races, even though activists from both parties often cooperate harmoniously.

Democratic pundits and activists have been equally anti-democratic. Take three examples from recent months. When the Campaign for America's Future (CAF) held its conference for progressives in Washington this past June, not a single Green was invited to speak. Writing in *Salon*, Paul Berman argued, "In order to defeat Bush, the Greens really have to be crushed politically." (Ironically, Berman is a contributor to a new book called *The Fight Is for Democracy*.) Writing in the *American Prospect Online*, my friend Michael Tomasky called on liberalish Democrats to attack Nader with "lupine ferocity" in order to make themselves look tough, suggesting for one that Nader should be blasted for wanting to halt aid to Israel and thus cause it to cease to exist. (When I asked Michael for his source for this particular slander, he referred me to the Green platform of 2000, which he claimed "advocated an end to US aid for Israel." Informed that the platform did no such thing, and only called for "peace in the Middle East based on respect for civil liberties and human rights," he did not reply.)

At bottom, these attacks on the Greens demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of what drives the upstart party's activists. Democrats like Berman and Tomasky believe that the Greens should fold themselves into the larger party and exercise influence from within, the way the Christian right has done with the Republican Party. What they miss is that many Green activists have tried that route—working on presidential campaigns like Jesse Jackson's in 1984 and 1988, and Jerry Brown's in 1992—and feel they got nowhere. Green voters won't come back to the Democratic fold unless they feel their concerns are being addressed. The process is called "co-optation," and it's how every minor-party threat in American history (save one, the Republicans) has been defused. Indeed, as the Howard Dean and Dennis Kucinich campaigns have engaged Green issues, grassroots Greens have responded by signing up.

Some Democrats justify taking a hard line by arguing that even a weak Green presidential campaign could end up hurting them, just as Pat Buchanan's measly turnout as the Reform Party's 2000 candidate arguably cost Bush the states of Iowa, New Mexico, Wisconsin and Oregon. Even Democrats who express respect for the Greens' political commitment say they understand the hard-liners' desire to snuff out the Greens. "Having announced that their goal is to supplant a corrupted Democratic Party, Greens can hardly complain when Dems use their clout to tilt the field even more against third parties," says Bob Borosage, co-director of the CAF.

Needless to say, the current Democrat-Green death struggle flows in the other direction too. It may not be possible for some Greens to make themselves look dumber than they did in 2002, when many supported the Minnesota party's decision to run a candidate against Senator Paul Wellstone, but they sure do try. "I think the Democrats should drop out of the presidential election," New Mexico healthcare activist Carol Miller shouted at a Washington press conference this July, getting cheers from her audience of Greens. Nader himself enjoys taunting Democrats with barbed comments about their weaknesses, reinforcing the sense that his main target is the party immediately to his right rather than both major parties at once.

Leaders and activists on both sides of the divide have their backs up like a pair of estranged relatives who can't bear the sight of each other, when in fact they have a common interest in 2004 and ought to be able to find ways to coexist. At the CAF conference last June, Jesse Jackson did make an eloquent plea for Democrats to let go of their anger at Nader and to welcome the Greens in anti-Bush organizing. But both Nader and the national Green co-chairs I spoke to say there have been no contacts or feelers from leading Democrats. In more reflective moments, even Greens who want their party to mount a strong presidential bid admit the obsessive sniping back and forth is a problem. "It is an unhealthy dynamic," says Green Party co-chair Ben Manski. "But it's all to the Democrats' shame," he quickly adds, attacking them for not making it possible for America to have a multiparty democracy. Meanwhile, an observer like Karl Rove can only chuckle with pleasure.

—M.L.S.

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revolt with open contempt—far worse than 2000—to anything that helps keep Bush in office." McChesney concludes, "Running a presidential candidate in 2004 for the Greens is probably a quantum leap off a cliff. It is the Greens' Jonestown."

This dispute has been roiling Green Party ranks for some time [see Ronnie Dugger, "Ralph, Don't Run," December 2, 2002]. In May, Rensenbrink and Tom Sevigny (then one of the party's five national co-chairs) circulated a memo proposing that the Greens run a vigorous, "home-grown" candidate for President, not Nader. This candidate would run with the intention of supporting the Democratic ticket if the race was very close, concentrating on "safe" states where Bush or a Democrat would be very likely to win and thus a Green effort would pose little risk of helping Bush. (Only seventeen states are generally considered to be "in play.") Greens would focus on a handful of Congressional races, with Nader running for Senate from Connecticut, his home state.

This proposal prompted a strong counterstatement circulated by Ben Manski, a youthful firebrand who was Nader's Midwest field coordinator in 2000 and has been a party co-chair since 2001. Manski's manifesto, titled "2004 in Perspective: Green & Growing," rapidly gained the endorsement of more than 160 party activists, including at least ten elected officials. It starts with a restatement of the party's hopes to effect the political transformation of America. Recalling the corporate free-trade inclinations of the Clinton/Gore years, bipartisan support for intervention and empire, and unaddressed issues like global warming, "Green & Growing" asserts that the party is ready to aim for and achieve "realistic" goals as a genuine opposition to both major parties. And the manifesto insists that the 2004 presidential race "is vital for the Greens":

> It's the race which deals directly with national policy, and which defines for the voters the Greens as a real party.... A strong Green presidential ticket will provide voters with the means to confront the establishment parties for their disastrous economic, international, ecological, and social policies. A strong Green ticket will force the establishment to address the failures of the electoral system, and to choose between the implementation of reforms such as Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), and the continued loss of votes to the Greens. A strong Green ticket will bring nonvoters into the arena of electoral politics, and thus strengthen the overall movement for democracy in the United States.

Dean Myerson, until October the Greens' national political coordinator and thus formally neutral in such arguments, disagrees—and, indeed, believes 2004 is the "most dangerous year" in the party's existence. "The best strategy to build the party," Myerson tells me, "is to not focus on states where we'll do poorly. Why should we hook ourselves to the Democrats' strategy and campaign against them? We should campaign in nonbattleground states and safe states. In medium-sized cities Nader will be on the front page—he'll actually get to talk about his issues and keep the focus there, not on his being a 'spoiler.'" Myerson insists that this is the year the party has to demonstrate its political maturity. "Many people just say to me, look at how the party grew in 2000; that's why we need to run again in '04. And I say, 'Lots of parties run presidential candidates and it doesn't help them grow.'"

The dispute over Nader's potential candidacy has been roiling Green Party ranks. For many, the overarching goal is beating Bush.

Right now, the Green debate over 2004 breaks into three distinct camps. There are those, a definite minority, who don't want the party to run any presidential candidate at all. There is another group, also a distinct minority, that backs Nader as the party's best spokesman and wants him to run an unconditional national campaign, though their motivations run from hard-core oppositionism to wanting to maximize their leverage in the event the race is close. The third group wants some version of a "safe states" strategy, and holds all shades of opinion as to whether Nader is the best candidate for it.

Ross Mirkarimi, an investigator in the San Francisco district attorney's office, who ran Nader's 2000 California operation and has often functioned as the state party's media spokesperson, has perhaps the most nuanced view. "We can devise a campaign plan that can contribute to the unseating of Bush while building the Green Party," he argues, noting that "we may be shopping for popular votes while the Democrats are shopping for electoral votes." Choosing his words slowly, he insists, "Democrats need to drive carefully as to where Greens may go, and the Greens need to do the same thing. A mechanism may be needed, whether it's over the table or covert, a sort of red phone to avoid danger and exercise diplomacy" [see "The Democrat-Green Death Struggle," opposite]. Is Nader capable of playing such a flexible role? "Ralph alone is not capable of acting in this manner," Mirkarimi says. "Ralph and a team and the party together are capable of devising such a strategy." Medea Benjamin, cofounder of Global Exchange and the Greens' 2000 candidate for US Senate in California, agrees that it's hard to see Nader calibrating his message and strategy in this way on his own. "I worry about the reputation of the Greens," she told me. "I think we'd get less votes with Nader this time than last time." Benjamin wants the Greens to be players in the presidential election, but only if the overarching goal is beating Bush.

The problem is that the Greens have no formal way to compel Nader to do anything he doesn't want to do. The party had little influence on his 2000 campaign strategy and hiring practices, a sore spot for many veteran Greens. Despite numerous requests, he never gave the national party his 2000 campaign donor list, claiming—incorrectly—that federal law prohibited such a contribution to the party. He only rented the list to the party three years after his run, when it was undoubtedly far less valuable. (In his defense, Nader always mentions the more than forty-four fundraisers he has attended on behalf of Green Party committees and candidates.)

But politics abhors a vacuum, and among the Greens this debate is generating support for an insurgent named David Cobb, the party's general counsel and a hardworking activist who helped found the Texas Green Party in 1999. On the issues, there is little to distinguish Cobb from Nader—indeed, he dates his own political awakening to a speech Nader gave in 1996. But in launching his admittedly longshot attempt to get the party's presidential nod, Cobb has made a series of pledges that stand as an implicit rebuke

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—Dean Rieck,
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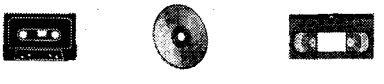

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Steven Pollock (Ph.D., Stanford University) is Associate Professor of Physics at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He has taught a wide variety of physics courses at all levels, from introductory physics to advanced nuclear and particle physics. He received the Boulder Faculty Assembly Teaching Excellence Award in 1998. He became a Pew/Carnegie National Teaching Scholar in 2001.

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and challenge to Nader—promising to share his volunteer lists with local and state party chapters, to freely share his donor lists with the party's national committee and to coordinate his hiring of staff with party affiliates. He has also stated that he will withdraw from the race if either Dennis Kucinich or Al Sharpton is the Democratic nominee, that he will run hard to prevent the election of a "corporate conservative" like Joe Lieberman and that otherwise he will follow a "strategic-states plan" focusing on states that are not "in play."

Asked in early October about Cobb's candidacy, Nader's first response is that he won't have anything to say before he makes his own 2004 decision. But after I describe Cobb's positions on Kucinich, Sharpton, Lieberman and "strategic states," he scoffs. "It sounds to me like political schizophrenia. You either run or you don't. You don't say to people in some states that we're going to ignore you." He also argues that the party shouldn't impose any kind of strategic constraints on its candidates. "No candidate will want to be bound by [having to avoid battleground states] and be told by the party that we don't want you to go into, say, Wisconsin. Imagine the major parties having that kind of restriction." Told that the Greens will defer any such decision until the party's national convention next June in Milwaukee, Nader says, "This shouldn't be delayed until June. They're not being fair to their candidates. They should have a meeting and come out with a policy." Almost as an afterthought he adds, "Assuming they can enforce it on their candidates." Nader has not ruled out leaving the Green fold and running as an independent. Nor is it inconceivable that he would file against Bush in some Republican primaries, and then try to switch to an independent line for the fall.

"The top priority should be to defeat Bush," Nader insists. "Obviously, the Democrats are having trouble showing how they can do that." With palpable frustration, he cites the Democrats' failure to make more headway from the corporate scandals and their timidity in the face of Republican appeals to war fever and patriotism. Growing more animated, he declares, "The real issue for Democrats beating up on the Greens is, can the Democrats win without a third-party effort to launch the issues that the Democrats are too dense or cautious or too indentured to raise themselves, which they'll then pick up?" Arguing that some kinds of poison can make a body stronger, he insists, with a touch of his own schizophrenia, that a third-party push could cause the Democrats "to say and do things that would get them more votes than they would lose to the third-party candidate."

If Nader and the Greens sound like they're contradicting themselves, it's because they're trying to bridge two conflicting goals: the long-term need for an independent political force and the short-term imperative of defeating Bush. In my opinion, 2004 is not 2000 and the "Gush-Bore" similarities I once wrote about don't apply now. I love Ralph and respect his legendary accomplishments and example, but another Nader run as a Green or independent without an explicit and binding agreement to concentrate on safe states would be a terrible mistake. Apart from risking the re-election of Bush, it would only hurt Nader. Barring an unforeseen shift in the contours of next year's election, he would do far worse than the 2.7 million votes he got in 2000. This is not his year.

As for the Greens, as long as the two-party duopoly misrules America, third-party efforts will percolate and independent voters will proliferate. But that doesn't mean that a particular party like the Greens is fated to have a long life beyond the margins. If the party is to grow outside of the progressive venues where it already has a foothold, it has to control its strong taste for self-indulgent symbolic statements and focus on where its opportunities are greatest, in local races in the one-party cities and counties where many of America's most alienated and disenfranchised citizens live. Nader and the Greens made their point about Democratic decrepitude in 2000; now they should make their own demonstration of good judgment or face their own decline. ■

LETTERS
CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

sieged us in that long-ago struggle. I am stunned and saddened that this also prevails today for our soldiers in Iraq. Poor equipment, antiquated weaponry and inadequate housing and food are outrages that must be redressed immediately. Perhaps part of that roughly $10 billion (of the $87 billion Iraqi aid package) slated for the likes of Turkey, Pakistan and Jordan could be diverted to our troops. BOB LUPO

Monticello, Fla.

■ Your article on the Florida Army National Guard in Baghdad was right on target. I spent sixteen years in A Company and retired in 1998 as its first sergeant. I've known many of its senior NCOs and officers since they were privates and green lieutenants. They are the finest men and soldiers I have ever known, and I am outraged by the treatment they are enduring. Sadly, it is symptomatic of a far larger problem experienced by the rest of the Florida Brigade and reservists in general.

The officers who reshaped the military after the Vietnam War intentionally shifted a large portion of the combat force into National Guard and Reserve forces to insure that in future conflicts the political leaders would seriously weigh the consequences and seek a broad base of public support before going to war. But this is a two-edged sword. While the call-ups bring a broad spectrum of public commitment, the treatment of these soldiers will quickly erode that support. These soldiers have become the new draftees. As a Vietnam veteran, I see the Regular Army "lifers" treating them with the same indifference the young draftees were treated with then. These soldiers were mobilized as individual companies, not as an intact brigade. I have received e-mails from company commanders and soldiers requesting everything from duct tape to portable two-way radios to ammunition. I fear they will return home as bitter and disillusioned as my generation did some twenty-five years ago. WILLIAM BROOKES

Granite City, Ill.

■ This article is dead on about the sad state of affairs in Iraq. Even sadder is that I'm old enough to remember reading the same type of article about Vietnam. And about the USSR in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Heavy weapons cannot erase the handwriting on the wall, they can only destroy the buildings. DEREK REA

THESE BOOTS WERE MADE FOR...

Oro Valley, Ariz.

■ Several of your contributors have made factual errors, which I wish to correct. First, they refer to George W. Bush as a Texan. He is not a Texan. I am a Texan, or more accurately a Texian, because my great-grandparents (who arrived there in 1839) were in Texas when it was a Republic. Bush was born in Connecticut so I suppose that makes him a Conn man.

Second, Bush does not wear "cowboy boots." Cowboy boots have the manure on the outside.

JOSEPH M. BRANOM

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(Continued From Page 6)

cabins and pickup trucks, cowboys and Indians, has been overwhelmed by the new chardonnay and Hummer folkways of stockbrokers and software engineers. Developers and county supervisors, eager to service the soaring demand for luxury living in low-tax unincorporated areas, have paid little heed to persistent warnings from fire officials that 80 percent of the brush was more than twenty years old and thus explosively flammable. Likewise, until the beginning of this year, scant attention was given to the bark-beetle infestation, following in the wake of the driest year in San Diego history, that is killing pine forests in local mountains.

Now nearly 300,000 acres of the 52nd district, including parts of nine Indian reservations, are an ashen desert. ("Hiroshima," gasped an awed childhood friend.) For a full week, a whirling dervish of a firestorm—flames 200 feet high erupting across a twenty-five-mile-wide front—chased firefighters back and forth across rugged terrain. Started by a lost hunter's careless flare, wind-whipped flames initially raced westward at high speed, overtaking and burning alive a dozen rural residents. Within a day they were incinerating affluent lifestyles in eucalyptus groves east of La Jolla, as well as more modest homes in Tierrasanta, well inside the San Diego city limits. Making an about-face at the command of onshore winds, the firestorm then returned toward its point of origin in the mountains.

At this writing, authorities estimate that the death toll from the ten great wildfires that swept Southern California will exceed twenty. More than 3,600 homes and businesses are now charcoal. One belonged to GOP Representative Duncan Hunter, the paleoconservative chair of the House Armed Services Committee. Together with his personal megaphone, hate-radio host Roger Hedgecock, Hunter is demanding old-fashioned frontier justice. In their view, the chief arsonist is lame-duck Governor Gray Davis, who, they claim, failed to dispatch aerial tankers and water-dropping helicopters that could have squelched the "Cedar Fire," the most murderous of the conflagrations. (Fierce Santa Ana winds and darkness, forestry officials respond, made such water drops ineffective.) Indeed, Hedgecock, a defrocked former mayor of San Diego (convicted of criminal offenses in the 1980s), has claimed on local and national radio—where he pinch-hits for drug-addled Rush Limbaugh—that Davis deliberately withheld firefighting resources from pro-recall San Diego County in order to concentrate them on Democratic Los Angeles County. Hedgecock also asserts that the fire tragedy is being exploited by "the left" (allegedly headed by Davis) and unions to raise taxes.

Davis may well share some quotient of culpability (he did, after all, cut the budget of the forestry department), but the White House deserves more of the blame. In mid-April, as the fire danger rose, Davis, supported by a bipartisan coalition of Democrats and Republicans, urged President Bush to declare a federal emergency in upland areas of San Bernardino, Riverside and San Diego counties. Bush fiddled until California was actually burning, finally denying the request on October 24. But then, with hypocritical urgency, the Administration exploited the tragedy to press its Orwellian "Healthy Forests" legislation, which would allow logging companies to loot undiseased, old-growth public forests.

At least in the case of the Cedar Fire, the ultimate responsibility belongs at home. As local firefighters' unions have been pointing out for years, San Diego County's reigning antigovernment, low-tax ethos—precisely what made it the birthplace of the recent recall—has led to critical underinvestment in fire services. Despite one of the worst urban-wildfire problems in the nation, San Diego has 35 percent fewer fire personnel than areas of comparable population and, indeed, is the only large, urbanized county in California to lack a county fire department.

To be fair to San Diego taxpayers, however, they do carry other burdens. As Steve Erie, resident expert on local government at the University of California, San Diego, told me: "America's so-called 'finest city' systematically underfunds vital public services such as fire protection while doling out hundreds of millions in corporate welfare to the owners of our perennially cellar-dwelling professional football and baseball teams." Former City Councilman Bruce Henderson has calculated that San Diego taxpayers have contributed more than $400 million in the past six years to support the Chargers and Padres, and more than $500 million to subsidize big hotels and theme parks. This is not a connection that Hunter

CALVIN TRILLIN

On General Boykin's Comments That His God's Bigger Than the Islam God ('Nya-Nya, Na, Nya-Nya')

The general says Islam's God's so small
He's just an idol, not a god at all.
The man's a moderate. Yes, you can cite
Much worse from zealots of the Christian right
(The gang that made a lapdog of Bush One,
And won the nomination for his son).
From Graham, Falwell, Robertson and such
You hear that Islam's wicked, inasmuch
As evil was the Prophet's stock in trade.
A worthy target of a great crusade,
He was, they say, a killer and a thief
Whose terroristic forces caused much grief.
It's not just that Mohammed's God is teeny,
Mohammed's made to sound like Mussolini.
From Bush, this sort of language from these kooks
Produces just the mildest of rebukes.
He knows from Rev. Rove he has to keep
These shepherds happy, since he needs their sheep.
Another Bushie pooch lies still—perhaps
A different dog, but in the same old laps.

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COMMENT

and Hedgecock—or, for that matter, many centrist Democrats—are eager for the public to understand. Moreover, as local environmentalists regroup behind a Rural Lands Initiative that would sensibly limit further development in San Diego's fire-prone mountains, Hunter and his allies are proposing a techno-military panacea for the wildfire problem: using Navy and Marine aircraft to water-bomb fires at their first detection. This way the trophy homes can keep multiplying in the back country, and the tax subsidies can keep flowing to local big business. MIKE DAVIS

Mike Davis, who lives in San Diego, is the co-author, most recently, of Under the Perfect Sun: The San Diego Tourists Never See *(New Press).*

In Fact . . .

HELLO, HISTORY, GIMME REWRITE

■ Faced by right-wing charges that an upcoming miniseries about Ronald Reagan was too hostile, CBS announced that Showtime would run it instead. If the television networks are going to start insisting that docudramas—be they about the Kennedys, Nixon, Princess Di, the Clintons, Reagan, whomever—stick to the facts, that's one thing. If on the other hand this is merely the latest instance of a network's craven cave-in, what else is new? Meanwhile, Representative John Dingell sent this letter to the producers: "In the interest of historical accuracy, please allow me to share with you some of my recollections of the Reagan years that I hope will make it into the final cut of the mini-series: $640 Pentagon toilets seats; ketchup as a vegetable; union busting; firing striking air traffic controllers; Iran-Contra; selling arms to terrorist nations; trading arms for hostages; retreating from terrorists in Beirut; lying to Congress; financing an illegal war in Nicaragua; visiting Bitburg cemetery; a cozy relationship with Saddam Hussein; shredding documents; Ed Meese; Fawn Hall; Oliver North; James Watt; apartheid apologia; the savings and loan scandal; voodoo economics; record budget deficits; double digit unemployment; farm bankruptcies; trade deficits; astrologers in the White House; Star Wars…"

TRIPPED UP

■ Some stories about Linda Tripp being awarded $595,000 said the Defense Department had violated her privacy rights by leaking information about her arrest on grand larceny charges. But Eric Alterman points out on his weblog (altercation.msnbc.com) that when she filled out a security clearance form for a Pentagon job, she didn't mention the arrest in response to the usual question about any criminal record. The facts were revealed in a story during the Lewinsky scandal in *The New Yorker*. Reporter Jane Mayer discovered Tripp's local police rap sheet. The Pentagon told her—truthfully—it had no knowledge of any arrest.

WAL-MART'S ILLEGALS

■ Jennifer Berkshire writes: The raids on sixty Wal-Mart outlets last month were intended to crack down on cleaning contractors who hire illegal immigrants with Wal-Mart's knowledge. The raids netted 250 illegals, most of whom will pay a stiff price for taking low-paid janitorial jobs: deportation. What's less clear is the impact the raids will have on the practices of Wal-Mart, its cleaning contractors or other employers. The Supreme Court's 2002 *Hoffman* decision, in which it ruled that an undocumented worker who'd been fired during a union organizing drive was not eligible for back pay, encourages employers to hire illegal immigrants. Employers have been pushing for similar rulings at the state level. Pennsylvania and Michigan have invoked *Hoffman* to deny workers' compensation to undocumented workers, while Massachusetts will soon rule on whether illegal immigrants are eligible for workers' comp. These rulings effectively create a big loophole in the Fair Labor Standards Act. Profits from sidestepping overtime or workers' comp are far in excess of the $10,000-per-worker fine Wal-Mart's cleaning contractors will likely pay.

RACE MATTERS

■ Q & A from Barbara Miner: A white man who has served prison time for a felony drug conviction applies for a job as a dishwasher. A black man with the same skills and education but no criminal record also applies. Who's more likely to get the job? Answer: The white man with the criminal record. A Milwaukee study found that white high school graduates with felony convictions for possession of cocaine with intent to sell were more likely to get entry-level jobs than black men with similar education and work history but no criminal record. The testers—two white men and two black men—applied in person at 350 places in Milwaukee in 2001. Whites with a criminal record were called back 17 percent of the time, blacks without a criminal record 14 percent. (Whites without criminal records had a 34 percent call-back rate.) Conservatives argue high unemployment among blacks is not due to race but to lack of education, criminal records, etc. This study suggests race *is* the most important factor.

ANTI-W. MESSAGES FROM THE GRAVE

■ Sally Baron died in Wisconsin on August 18 at 71. Remembering how she used to watch TV news programs and swear at W. ("She thought he was a liar," her daughter Maureen recalled), her children composed this death notice: "Memorials in her honor can be made to any organization working for the removal of President Bush." Gertrude M. Jones, 81, who died on August 25 in New Orleans, left similar instructions. After Baron's posthumous protest was reported by the AP, dozens of people wrote they had donated in her name to their favorite anti-Bush group. Go and do likewise. It is later than you think.

NEWS OF THE WEAK IN REVIEW

■ Senator Trent Lott on events in Iraq: "If we have to, we just mow the whole place down, see what happens. You're dealing with insane suicide bombers who are killing our people, and we need to be very aggressive in taking them out."

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Lost Causes

THOMAS W. LAQUEUR

THE CULTURE OF DEFEAT: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery.
By Wolfgang Schivelbusch. Metropolitan. 403 pp. $27.50.

Nations, like individuals, sustain trauma, mourn and recover. And like individuals they survive by making sense of what has befallen them, by constructing a narrative of loss and redemption. Writ large, this interpretive enterprise constitutes a "culture of defeat," a collective response that makes it possible to live with failure in the greatest of national efforts—war—and ultimately somehow to snatch victory from defeat. Wolfgang Schivelbusch, an independent scholar who divides his time between Germany and New York, begins his polyphonic, brilliant study with the case of the American South after 1865, then turns to France after its losing war with Prussia in 1870–71 and ends with Weimar Germany.

The book does not, however, end with Weimar; an epilogue considers September 11. Our image of that day is not the hole in the side of the Pentagon, Schivelbusch reminds us, but rather the rubble of the World Trade Center. The reasons seem obvious enough: The real target was not military but economic; the real hatred of the attackers was directed against the symbol of American world dominance in the age of globalization; the loss of life and the gaping wound in the earth were on an altogether different scale in New York than on the banks of the Potomac. But there is another reason that touches the historical unconscious: The World Trade Center fell. A successful attack is not a defeat, of course, but this one embodies "something of the fall of Troy, the first of all defeats." In the wheel of fortune, winners rise and losers fall; heroes "fall" in battle, they do not die; we remember the end of the Soviet Union not by the lowering of its flag in 1991 but by the fall of the Berlin wall. No one thinks of the end of the Vietnam War as the 1973 cease-fire signing but rather as the last, desperate effort of people clamoring to get on helicopters as they lifted off from the embassy roof for the last time.

Just as earthquakes and aerial bombardments can reveal layers of earlier ruined cities, might not, Schivelbusch asks, "the destruction of September 11 [have] uncovered the suppressed remains of Vietnam"? Could the internationalism and peacefulness of the United States during the past thirty years have been a sort of seemingly benign interim period, like that of Weimar, with its "pleasant illusion of a pacified Germany," or of the last decades of the nineteenth century when French calls for *revanche* were expressed in cultural rather than military terms? In short, is "America's post-September 11 war fever...really a response to an earlier and unresolved defeat?" With this question the epilogue ends. The book appeared before the denouement of that fever in Iraq.

Defeat is the greatest trauma in the life of nations. How they cope with it is the subject of Wolfgang Schivelbusch's brilliant study.

But we can offer a response. It does not matter, Thomas Friedman reassures us, that the ostensible reason for the unseemly speed with which we rushed to war turns out to be indefensible. The "real reason" for war, he says, is that we had to make war on someone serious after a series of earlier attacks on United States interests that, in the post-Vietnam era, we let slide. Never mind that the object of our

Thomas W. Laqueur is a professor of history at the University of California, Berkeley. His most recent book is Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation *(Zone).*

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vengeance had so little to do with the insult at hand. We as a nation seem to long for a return to 1945, for the "Great Generation" and our last clear victory. It was reported that troops being sent to Iraq had been coached to hand out candies and other gifts to children as their tanks and transports passed by so that cameras could capture what was to be a remake of World War II liberations; saving Private Lynch was meant of course to be *Saving Private Ryan* redux. Iraq was a war waged by those who sat on the sidelines in Vietnam. Perhaps the illusory triumphs of the past few months represent our collective effort to lay to rest the "psychological and cultural fall-out" of defeat that is the subject of Schivelbusch's book.

The claim that history is written by the winners is, at best, a half-truth. Writing a history of victory is relatively easy because what fortune smiles upon seems somehow natural, almost inevitable. But defeat, never expected by the loser, has to be explained and re-explained; it offers a real challenge. "Victories are often deceptive," says a commentator quoted in a footnote, "but defeats are always instructive."

Only something deep and troubling—a moral failing, a betrayal, the treachery of a stab in the back, madness, the sudden collapse of national spirit, a tragic, hidden, wrong turn in the past that pits a culture against some inexorable tide of human progress—can account, from the loser's perspective, for something so terrible as defeat. The task is intellectually bracing, and some of the greatest historians of the Western tradition have labored in its shadow: Thucydides, in exile after losing a battle, writing of the collapse of Athens; Augustine reeling from the sack of Eternal Rome as he wrote *The City of God*; Guicciardini, also in exile, recounting the savage war that saw Italy in ruins at the feet of the German emperor; Tocqueville, who bears in his person traces of almost every political and cultural defeat the nineteenth century had to offer. There is a long tradition of thinking about failure. It has from the beginning had its tropes: Victory has dogged defeat, defeat victory, in a great cycle of birth and death, will and its negation. "The last shall be first"; the mocked, crucified Christ is resurrected and assures eternal life; winners will always face new challenges from rivals; all is change—*sic transit gloria mundi*. The culture of defeat—the sorts of stories a defeated society tells about its loss, the ways it borrows from its conqueror in order to someday be in a position to seek restitution, the ways in which victors appropriate from losers, the politics of reversal—are thus elemental. But they are also historically specific.

Schivelbusch's first case study is the American South, whose crushing defeat by the Union fostered the myth of the Lost Cause. We follow this peculiar narrative of hopelessness and heroism from the South's prewar identification with England's seventeenth-century Cavaliers and with the defeated Scots of the eighteenth century up to Appomattox, where it became a kind of regional religion that soon acquired its saints and martyrs. Robert E. Lee became the saint, while James Longstreet, a much more successful general, became the villain who betrayed Lee at Gettysburg and ended Southern hopes for victory through his Judas-like behavior. By the late 1870s the myth of the Old South had spread north. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was turned into a play with nary a hint of its old abolitionist fervor; a spate of plantation novels culminating in *Gone With the Wind* made the dreamy Old South a model for an alternative and better life that, in turn, made the new South of Jim Crow a welcome member of the Union.

Defeat has often given birth to dreams of inflicting revenge, of restoring things to their proper state and of imperial conquest.

The French section of this book centers on the meaning of *revanche* for various constituencies and the many cultural forms it took. Despite the richness of Schivelbusch's account, it is an idea waiting for an even fuller history. The word itself was new to English in the nineteenth century, a borrowing from the language of international diplomacy. But the notion that a nation and not just a ruler has to right the wrongs done to it, to take revenge and return matters to their proper state, was itself new. Revanchism as a political program, so attractive to many nations after World War I, came into its own after the humiliating defeat of France by Prussia in 1871. From the perspective of the Jacobin tradition, France had failed because it had deviated from the path of virtue into royalism, Bonapartism and religion. For devout Catholics and royalists of various stripes, defeat was the result of divine punishment for the secularization that had begun in the revolution. One side developed the cult of the wound, the sacred bleeding heart of Jesus as an image of counterrevolution that would save defeated France and restore it to glory. Republicans appropriated the wound image to mean the gaping wound of Alsace and Lorraine, which had to be recovered—although not through military efforts—for the national body to be made whole. There was *revanche* through secular education (Prussia, it was said, had won because of its schoolmasters); through the *élan vital* propounded by Barres's cult of egotism (the nation had become soft and lethargic); and through the pompous and silly military theater that starred General Boulanger (bread and circuses can make things seem all right). Some people recalled Gallic resistance to the Romans, others Joan of Arc's battle against the English. Sport offered hope for salvation, but more important, empire offered an even headier displacement of desire. Some of the greatest proponents of *revanche*, like Léon Gambetta, the statesman who more than anyone secured broad support for the Third Republic, came to believe that Algeria could substitute for Alsace; overseas triumphs dulled the pain of defeat in Europe with the pleasures of victory abroad. One should be suspicious in our day of those who look back nostalgically at the British Empire as the path forward for a new America.

By the time we get to Germany many changes have already been rung on the basic themes of the culture of defeat. But Schivelbusch is incapable of writing a dull page. Pieces fit together in the most unexpected of ways. There was, for example, the cult of life on the frontlines—Ernst Jünger is its most famous exponent—with its ritual of rebirth by fire for warriors but not citizens. Even liberal politics started to use the mythic rebirth-in-the-flames-of-war motif in their calls for national regeneration. Americanism—notably in the form of taylorism (factory design based on time-motion studies)—seemed the way forward for others, since it was dynamic and rational. The victor's culture could be borrowed and transformed into something righteous by the loser without succumbing to the vulgarity of the New World. And of course, there was the National Socialist answer of creating a *Volksgemeinschaft* of those who belonged to the martyred nation of 1918, and expelling or suppressing those who stood outside it. If there was a class struggle in this narrative it was between a proletarianized Germany and a bourgeois West. Berlin in this period becomes a world city precisely because it was a city in defeat; like Paris after 1815 it sought to become capital of the modern. Locals were proud of Potsdamer-Platz and its heroic traffic jams because they repre-

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sented concretely a new, no longer backward and defeated, nation.

Schivelbusch's three case studies all come from the period after the "cabinet wars" of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when a whole people, and not just soldiers and rulers, suffered defeat or enjoyed victory. Combat itself did not directly touch civilians until the American Civil War—and did so unequally in subsequent wars as well—but whatever the real suffering on the home front, the wars themselves came increasingly to be seen as, and indeed to a large extent were, struggles between whole peoples and their civilizations. The nation as a whole went to war. The national psyche was on the line as one people's culture and history faced another's. This new understanding created new hopes; the people could save the nation if its army and government could not. The *levée en masse*—mass mobilization—saved the French Revolution from its enemies in 1792; it failed to stop the Prussians in 1871, but its efforts gave legitimacy to the republic born of defeat. Hitler in 1933 admired the energy of the people rising to rescue the *tricolore* from the humiliation of Sedan as precisely the sort of national fervor Germany so tragically lacked in 1918. The people can save the nation, if not literally, then in the world court of honor by how they respond to the events of the battlefield.

There are, according to Schivelbusch, patterns and archetypes that structure cultures of defeat. After the initial shock of defeat there is what he calls the "dream state," a kind of unreality that is born of a sense that the nation has been cleansed, that the old and tyrannical regimes that had led to ruin are gone, that anything is now possible. This dreamlike condition—the loss of the reality principle—is manifested in many ways: dance crazes in France and Germany, for example, that were outlets for emotions of relief and an expression of the hope of oblivion; in delusional politics like the South's belief for almost two years that the antebellum status quo was just around the corner; and even, arguably, in the German communist Spartacist uprising in 1919 or the Paris Commune of 1871.

Then there is awakening from the dream state, which produces new stories born of national myths, great epics and a dominant literature. So the embrace of *der Dolchstoss*—the stabbed-in-the-back theory—to explain Germany's unexpected defeat in 1918 is experienced through Wagner's *Ring* cycle, so well-known that it could become an allegory not just for the foibles of the gods but for the fate of nations. Germany

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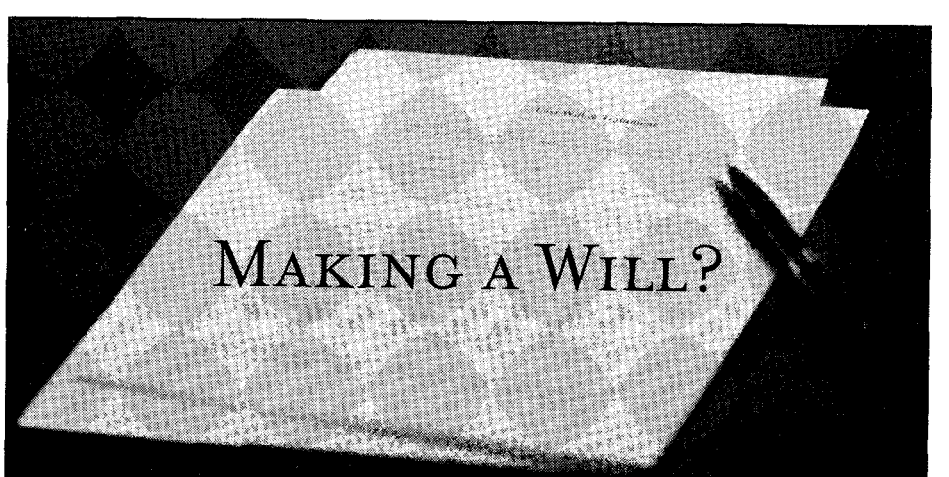

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is Siegfriedland, its enemies the perfidious Hagen. (He is, we might add, usually figured as a Jew.) Sir Walter Scott's novels of chivalrous Highland clans, the martyrdom of Joan of Arc and the death of Roland fighting the infidel Saracens refracted loss and connected the unfortunate present with a glorious past, serving similar purposes in France and the American South.

There are many versions of the story of defeat, and Schivelbusch tries to catalogue them. In one of these, the vanquished manage to construe the victors as inferior where it really counts, and their triumph as the result of some spurious advantage. The winners collude in this; they worry about the cultural costs of their triumph and thereby give some credence to the loser's story. Henry James and Henry Adams, for example, deflected their critiques of Gilded Age America onto the figure of the Southern gentleman "as a moral hero in a deeply immoral world." In another variant the losers turn the sour taste of defeat into the sweet melancholy of unrewarded righteousness. Thus, Confederate defeat on the ground becomes the Southern Lost Cause; Germans insist that they hadn't actually been defeated on the battlefield; the French turn loss into longing for Alsace and Lorraine. These kinds of stories often envisioned new and morally grander roles after defeat than before: France held itself out as the spiritual counterweight to German scientific barbarism, Germany as a bulwark against Bolshevism, the South as the savior of the white man. Losers also told themselves that they had gained something from the winners, and managed to keep for themselves the cultural treasures they had borrowed: "To invoke Karl Marx, one could almost say that the task of the downtrodden is to rescue innovation from its masters, delivering it from alienation."

It would be hard to exaggerate the breadth and brilliance of the variations Schivelbusch plays on these themes over fifty years of history and two continents. This book is like the most intricate of jazz; the riffs are what matter. The last page is characteristic of the dizzying analytic connections that make it both pleasurable and unsettling. The journalist and critic Walter Dirks—no friend of the Nazis—understood, we are told, the attraction that speed held for his countrymen: the thrill of unimpeded traffic flow on the autobahns that Hitler had built, the seduction of being transported through space without any apparent resistance or any effort of one's own, the comfort of being a member on the move of the new Volkswagen community. Movement resonated for a defeated people, and the Nazis knew it. These observations of Dirks's recall the passion, Schivelbusch suggests, for the *vélo* in *fin-de-siècle* France, still smarting, after almost thirty years, from the loss of Alsace and Lorraine. Perhaps the car is the new version of the bicycle and for the same reason: the instinct for motion. It had been manifest in the *levée en masse* that had tried to save the nation in 1870 and more successfully before that, in the dark year of 1792, and also in the *gymnastique*, a project to build national strength through physical fitness, that the Prussians embraced after their defeat by the French in the Napoleonic wars. A dance mania, Schivelbusch observes, seems to follow defeats, the moments of national delirium before the bitter truth sinks in. "Perhaps, too, reclaimed motion is a form of *revanche*," he suggests, adding that "the same energy may be at work in those revolutionary groups that since the nineteenth century have been referred to not as parties but as *movements*." Schivelbusch does for culture what Freud on a good day did for his patients; he weaves a web of meaning out of seemingly disparate, in themselves minor and perhaps forgotten experiences.

Schivelbusch does for culture what Freud did on a good day for his patients, weaving a web of meaning out of disparate experiences.

Those of us who have read Schivelbusch's earlier book, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century*, can never again take a train into a European city or cross a trestle in quite the innocent way we did before. We think of Heine's comment about the smell of the North Sea coming nearer to the smells of Paris, of the leveling of land as we go over hollows and through mountains, of the miraculous transformation of consciousness as we emerge from the train shed into the magnificent station itself and on into the city beyond. He is a brilliant reader of culture.

But in this book culture tends to take over to the point that politics appears to have no independent existence. Cultures of defeat seem to ventriloquize through politicians. They are, however, not just its mouthpieces. Class interests have a life of their own; there are alternative communities of memory; there are losers among the lost. Schivelbusch, of course, would not deny this, but he writes as if memory were its own agent. One might, alternatively, want to explain Northern complicity with Jim Crow less through the triumph of the Lost Cause in the land of the victors than through the carefully crafted strategies of politicians. William Howard Taft, for example, understood that the South had been willing to trade economic diversification for the maintenance of apartheid, and he sought its votes on the basis of its deeply rooted regime of racial dominance. The white man, he told white voters, was the best friend the Negro ever had; the federal government had no interest in social equality; the Fifteenth Amendment did not mean the South was to be dominated by an ignorant black electorate. This is not the Lost Cause triumphant but a politician playing to sectional interests. The Lost Cause made headway because it was good for national economic integration and hence for business; the culture of commerce spoke louder than the culture of defeat.

We might also question whether there really is such a thing as a culture of defeat even within one nation or would-be nation. Among the vanquished there were winners, and among the losers some did not succumb to outside conquerors but to internal foes. Black communities in the South continued to celebrate the Civil War and particularly emancipation as best they could. Some white elites suffered less from the defeat at Appomattox than from defeat by lower-class whites. One thinks of the magnificent bronze statue of Leroy Percy as a medieval knight that stands over his grave in the Greenville, Mississippi, cemetery; his is the lost cause of the aristocratic planter class overwhelmed by the Klan, the violent branch, as Schivelbusch calls it, of a very different interpretation of defeat.

We still need a history of how cultures of defeat die. Germany is now the pacifist heartland of Europe; France is a strong social democracy with only the dimmest memory of 1870–71. Few Frenchmen could tell a visitor that the hideous Church of the Sacré Coeur was built to expiate the sins of the Commune. But in the American South, the culture of defeat lives on with a kind of lunatic creativity. At rural state fairs one can buy the Stars and Bars with the head of a Native American emblazoned on the field. One majestic loser appropriates another. The battle over the Confederate flag in Mississippi in 2001 filled the Ole Miss student newspaper with debates still fresh from 1860. And perhaps the defeat of the South in the civil rights era has

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taken on some of the tricks of the old Lost Cause, as the victors are faced with new efforts to transform their culture. The resurgence of the death penalty in the states of the old Confederacy and their leadership in the culture wars may be another chapter in Schivelbusch's story. Some defeats clearly die harder than others. ■

DANCE

Diaghilev in Perm

LYNN GARAFOLA

Few Westerners have ever heard of Perm. A former czarist administrative center, rustbelt Soviet city and gateway to the gulag, Perm was long off-limits to foreigners. In 1990, shortly after Mikhail Gorbachev opened the city, I became one of the first Westerners to visit. This spring I returned.

Perm has played a small but important role in the history of ballet. During World War II the Kirov (now Maryinsky) Ballet was evacuated there from besieged Leningrad. The city has an excellent ballet company and one of the best training academies in Russia. But its main claim to fame is that Serge Diaghilev, the founder of the celebrated Ballets Russes, grew up there. Between 1909 and 1929, the Ballets Russes brought ballet into the twentieth century and Russian ballet to the West. Diaghilev commissioned music from Stravinsky, Ravel, Debussy and Prokofiev; designs from Picasso, Matisse and Derain. His choreographers, who included Michel Fokine, Vaslav Nijinsky, Bronislava Nijinska and George Balanchine, dominated ballet until the 1970s.

The Ballets Russes never performed in Russia, and except for *Firebird* and *Petrouchka*, which entered the Soviet repertory just after the revolution (only to vanish by the 1930s), the modernist and neoclassical traditions associated with the company were anathema to cultural commissars. As for Diaghilev, who died in 1929, he became a Soviet nonperson. He was gay, a cosmopolitan, a champion of "formalism," with brothers who had fought for the Whites. Not until 1982 did a collection of writings by and about him appear in the Soviet Union. And only in 1987 would a conference about Diaghilev take place in Perm.

The collapse of the Soviet Union brought many changes to the ballet world, including a sometimes-frenzied effort to reconnect with both the West and the czarist past. Dancers flocked abroad, returning with videotapes, and works by once-proscribed Western choreographers like Balanchine entered the Russian repertory. The Kirov, using notations spirited out of Russia in 1918, mounted czarist-era versions of *The Sleeping Beauty* and *La Bayadère* that sought to obliterate the Soviet imprint on these ballets. The company also mounted an all-Diaghilev program.

I went to Perm this May to attend an arts festival with the somewhat grandiose title "Diaghilev Seasons: Perm, Petersburg, Paris." Sponsored by the Perm Tchaikovsky Theater of Opera and Ballet, the Perm State Art Gallery and various regional and municipal organizations, the festival showcased the city's ballet, modern dance and opera companies. Even if Diaghilev was only a pretext for the festival's civic boosterism, the performances were a barometer of the state of dance in Russia today, especially among companies seldom, if ever, seen in the West.

Since 1995 the Perm State Ballet has acquired several Balanchine ballets. Three were performed during the festival—*Apollo*, Balanchine's oldest extant work and first collaboration with Stravinsky, the ballet that he later said marked the turning point in his evolution to neoclassicism; *La Sonnambula*, a haunting work from 1946; and the 1941 *Ballet Imperial*, a rhapsodic homage to old St. Petersburg and the imperial traditions of its ballet. In addition to *Apollo*, commissioned by Diaghilev in 1928, the company performed two other Ballets Russes works—Fokine's *Chopiniana*, as *Les Sylphides* is known in Russia, the first plotless ballet; and *Le Spectre de la Rose*, a pas de deux that celebrated both the androgyny and the virtuosity of its first male star, Vaslav Nijinsky. And to com-

Lynn Garafola, who is the author of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes *(Oxford), teaches at Barnard College.*

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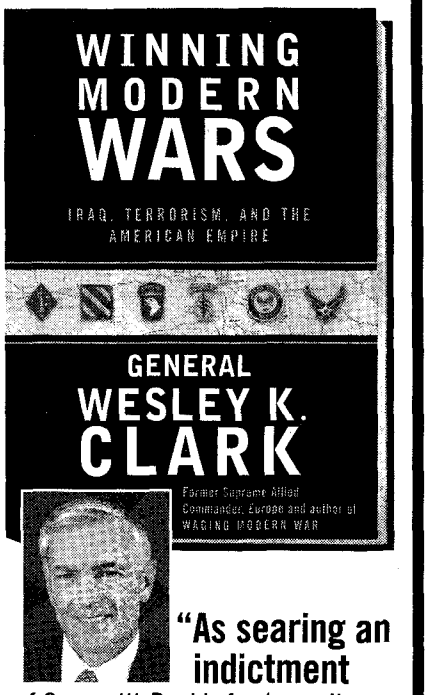
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plete the ballet offerings there was a revival of *The Sleeping Beauty*, freshly costumed and with new scenery.

By reconnecting with Russian ballet's diasporic counterpart, the Perm company has taken a conservative approach to the problem of repertory. The opera company that shares the Tchaikovsky Theater has followed a different path. Rejecting the ballet's archeological-genealogical approach, Georgii Isaakian, the theater's artistic director, uses staging to update older works and infuse them with a contemporary spirit.

Thus, he has conceived Massenet's 1914 opera *Cléopatre* as a dizzy display of artistic styles—Egyptian/exotic in Act I, kitsch Hollywood (complete with clips of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton) in Act II and drab neorealism for Cleopatra's death in Act III. For Rodion Shchedrin's *Lolita*, based on Vladimir Nabokov's novel, Isaakian creates a fantasy America of the 1950s, playful and absurdist, with beach towels and patio furniture, a real car (though not an American model with tailfins) and Day-Glo lighting.

The 1930s ended experimentation, not only in ballet but also in what was called "free dance." With Russia virtually sealed off from abroad, developments in American modern dance or European contemporary dance remained virtually unknown until the 1980s. Amazingly, the liveliest contemporary dance scene in Russia today is in the Urals. In 1990, on my first visit to Perm, I met that scene's charismatic godfather, Yevgeny Panfilov, who was stabbed to death last year in an unsolved crime. Founder of the Experimental Modern Dance Theater, he had a studio in a palace of culture sponsored by the Perm Electrotechnical Plant. I watched a company warm-up and run-through of a work that reminded me of Pina Bausch but impressed me by its commitment to movement exploration. Gesture, pedestrian movement, ritual, acrobatics and even speech made up his idiosyncratic idiom.

The festival's all-Panfilov program included a surprise hit—*Country Women, 1945*. Performed by an amateur group called the Fat Ladies Ballet (the women, all large, had to promise not to lose weight), this is a moving tribute to those ageless, shapeless Russian women who scrounged for food, kept homes and children, and waited for men who would never return from the Second World War. Using the simplest of means, Panfilov shows his fourteen heroines yearning for tenderness and expressing gaiety, even glamour; they march smartly to military tunes and couple off to dance, discovering in movement both physical and emotional pleasure. *Country Women* struck a deep chord in the audience; despite skepticism about all things Soviet, the Great Patriotic War, as Russians call World War II, continues to be remembered as a time of popular heroism.

Tiuriaga was more troubling. Performed by the all-male Boitsovskii Club Dance Company, an amateur group from a local military school, the work has strong political and homoerotic overtones. The setting is a camp in the gulag, the inspiration Walt Whitman's poem "The Singer in the Prison," the movement style gymnastic. During the Soviet period, male eroticism was kept tightly under wraps. Yet the male body was also celebrated. No country produced so many Olympians as the Soviet Union, or so many great male ballet dancers. Panfilov (like the better-known Boris Eifman) eroticizes the male body, depicting it as sexually active, attractive both to women and to men—a reason perhaps that audiences do not necessarily perceive it as homosexual. In *Tiuriaga*, scenes of same-sex tenderness are followed by self-indulgent fantasies of a male brothel, presumably an attack on Soviet puritanism. Unlike in the United States, in Russian contemporary dance, men have the edge on women.

Tatiana Baganova's *Svadebka*, set to the 1923 Stravinsky score known in the West as *Les Noces*, was another happy surprise. Over the years I have seen several versions of *Les Noces*, but none ever approached the emotional power of the original, a masterpiece of ballet modernism choreographed by Bronislava Nijinska. Baganova's, amazingly, did just that—with an ensemble of only ten dancers, members of her Ekaterinburg-based company, Provincial Dances Theater. She draws on the country's rich stock of folk traditions, the mother lode of Russian art. The strange scurrying figures robed like saints, with the tilted heads of icons and the angular gestures of *lubki* (folk art prints), seem to spring from collective Russian memory, while the pathways followed by the dancers come from the treasury of Russian folk dances. Baganova makes the cutting of the Bride's braid the ballet's culminating ritual, an act as violent as rape.

Under the energetic direction of Nadezhda Beliaeva, the Perm State Art Gallery has also set about recuperating the modernist past. Some of that past lay packed away in the gallery's own basements—paintings by Kliun, Popova, Rodchenko, Goncharova and other avant-garde masters, bought by the new Soviet government in the 1920s for

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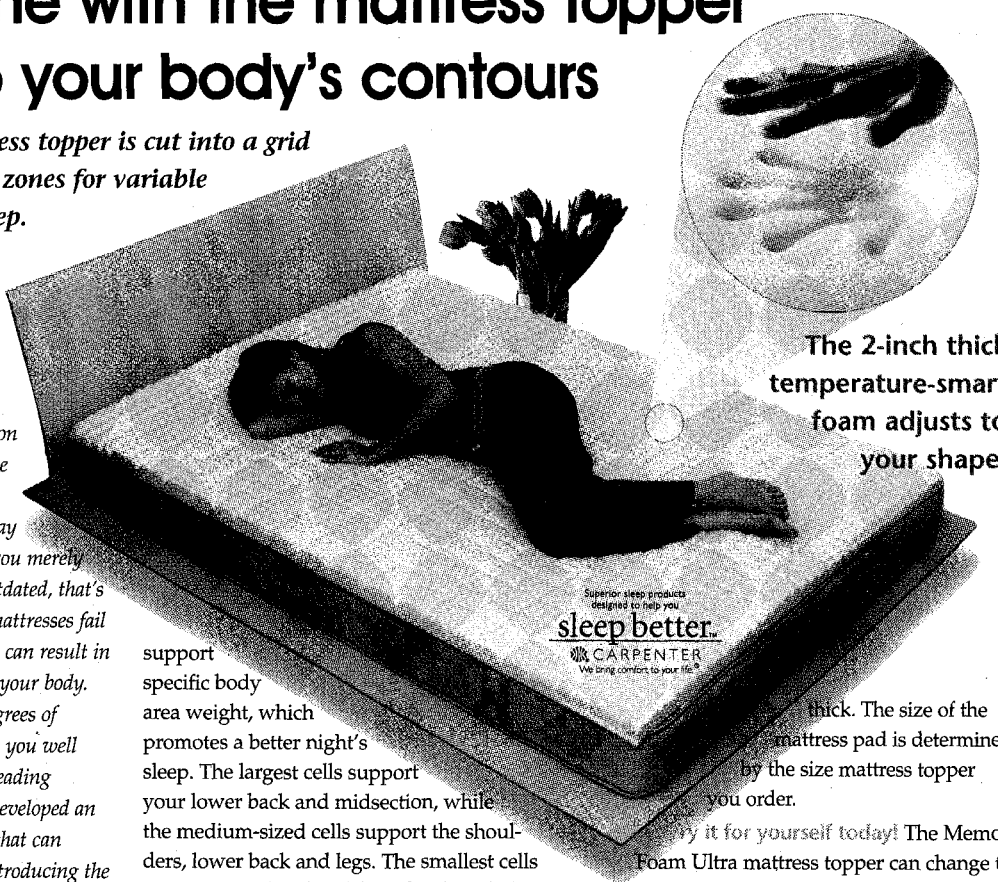

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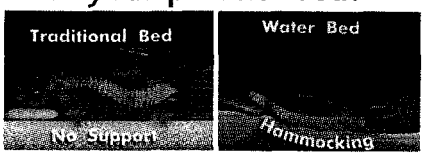

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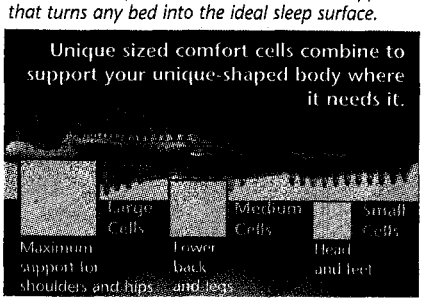
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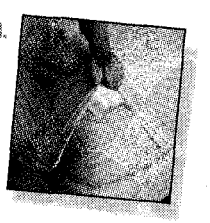

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a museum of contemporary art in Moscow, and later scattered. In recent years, the collection has been augmented by donations from private individuals. For the festival it was further buttressed by a dozen paintings lent by a German collector, Edic Natanov, which included Tatlin's splendid *Peasant Woman*, from 1911, two wonderful Popovas and a pair of Malevich paintings, executed less than two years apart, that exemplified the rapid transformation of the Cubo-Futurist artist into a Suprematist at the outset of World War I. Beliaeva's next big project is an exhibition on gentry life in Perm before the revolution, with old pictures, samovars, furniture, magazines and icons—the detritus of an unforgotten class and time.

The obsession with recovering pre-Soviet tradition operates at all levels of society. Everywhere people talk of the past. For the first time I hear of Grand Duke Michael's execution by the Cheka in 1918, and on a short tour of the city, I am shown the building where he lived, now marked by a plaque. I learn that Ekaterina Geidenreikh, a protegée of Agrippina Vaganova and a formative influence on the Perm ballet school, was arrested at the start of World War II and sent to a camp in the Perm region. After her release she remained in Perm (as an "exile" she could not return to Leningrad). Churches are being rebuilt, monasteries reopened, icons buried in the 1930s seeing the light of day. The golden domes of newly restored churches gleam in the sun, not only in Perm but also in run-down villages on the way to a monastery, where I was stunned to see colleagues bowing rapturously before icons and drinking water from a holy spring. The church on the Diaghilev family estate is being restored, and a volume containing the long-hidden memoirs of Diaghilev's stepmother, letters and the prison photographs of Diaghilev's brother Valentin and Valentin's son Sergei has been published. Participants in the conference portion of the festival included Alexander Laskin, a professor at the St. Petersburg Academy of Culture, and others whose research has mined the rich Diaghilev archives in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

In 1990 the Diaghilev House museum occupied a single room of Public School No. 11. Now, in addition to a library (with more than a thousand volumes), it has grown to several rooms. The walls are covered with photographs, posters and reproductions of set and costume designs, while a hodgepodge of collectibles add period atmosphere. Ballet costumes of recent vintage stand in the music room, and throughout one sees newly commissioned paintings of Diaghilev and his dancers that he definitely would have found wanting.

When I first went to Perm, few people spoke more than a few words of English. Today, one encounters people who speak excellent English, who have spent weeks and sometimes months studying in England, who read English novels for pleasure and know the television version of *Pride and Prejudice* inside out. Many have traveled to New York and Washington, journeys unimaginable in 1990. These are the success stories of the new Russia. But in a city like Perm with high unemployment (although the severe crisis of the mid-1990s has eased), many young people drift, becoming monks or junkies in a society with no place for them. Beer ads are everywhere, and public drinking, especially among young men, prompts much public concern. And despite the restoration efforts, much of the city looks shoddy and ill-kept.

But in the arts hope far outweighs the signs of anomie. The Soviets may have used the arts for their own purposes, but they never ignored them. Today, even as critics decry the "crisis of culture" and the "crisis of ideas," they do so convinced that art has a privileged role in voicing a society's most cherished beliefs. It's hard to imagine anyone in America ascribing to art, to say nothing of ballet, quite so exalted a cultural role. But then, in Russia, even in Soviet times, audience appeal was never the sole yardstick measuring the worthiness of high art. MTV may have come to Russia, but it has yet to seduce the country's artists and intellectuals from the conviction that art—high art—still matters. ■

FILMS

A Documentary Coup

STUART KLAWANS

THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVISED • THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
MY ARCHITECT: A SON'S JOURNEY

The lights go down in the courtroom, a 16-millimeter projector shoots out its beam, and into the trial blazes evidence of an unprecedented nature: not a report of criminal events but the crime itself, stored on film and now released again into the world. Strange to think that only seventy years have passed since Fritz Lang imagined this moment in *Fury*. Lang was arguably more sophisticated than anyone now alive about camera tricks and propaganda—he'd led the world in deploying special effects, and had been offered the cordial support of Goebbels himself (in response to which he'd fled Germany); and yet, as his first artistic act in America, Lang told a story about the reality of filmed images and their liberating potential. Who among us today would second him? We live in the era of asymptotic prophecy: The truth, which we'll never arrive at, would make us something like free.

Here, though, are two people who share Lang's faith: the Irish filmmakers Kim Bartley and Donnacha O'Briain. In their thoroughly remarkable documentary *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, now playing an exclusive engagement at New York's Film Forum, they show how a critical public event was seen in three different segments of the moving-image media. The event was the coup in April 2002 against Venezuela's president, Hugo Chávez, and its abrupt failure. The media in question are Venezuela's privately owned television stations, which fomented the seizure of power and tried to sustain it; the state-run television station, which helped break the coup, serving at a key moment as the sole link between the besieged presidential palace and the outside world; and the Bartley-O'Briain documentary itself.

Whether the filmmakers intended the truthfulness of their own work to be questioned, I can't say. I suspect, in fact, they did not. Bartley and O'Briain had come to Caracas in autumn 2001 to film a profile of Chávez—a profile that he must have thought would be admiring, since he gave them access to the Miraflores Palace and his presidential plane. They recorded his rallies, his visits to the rural poor and his weekly call-in television program. They inter-

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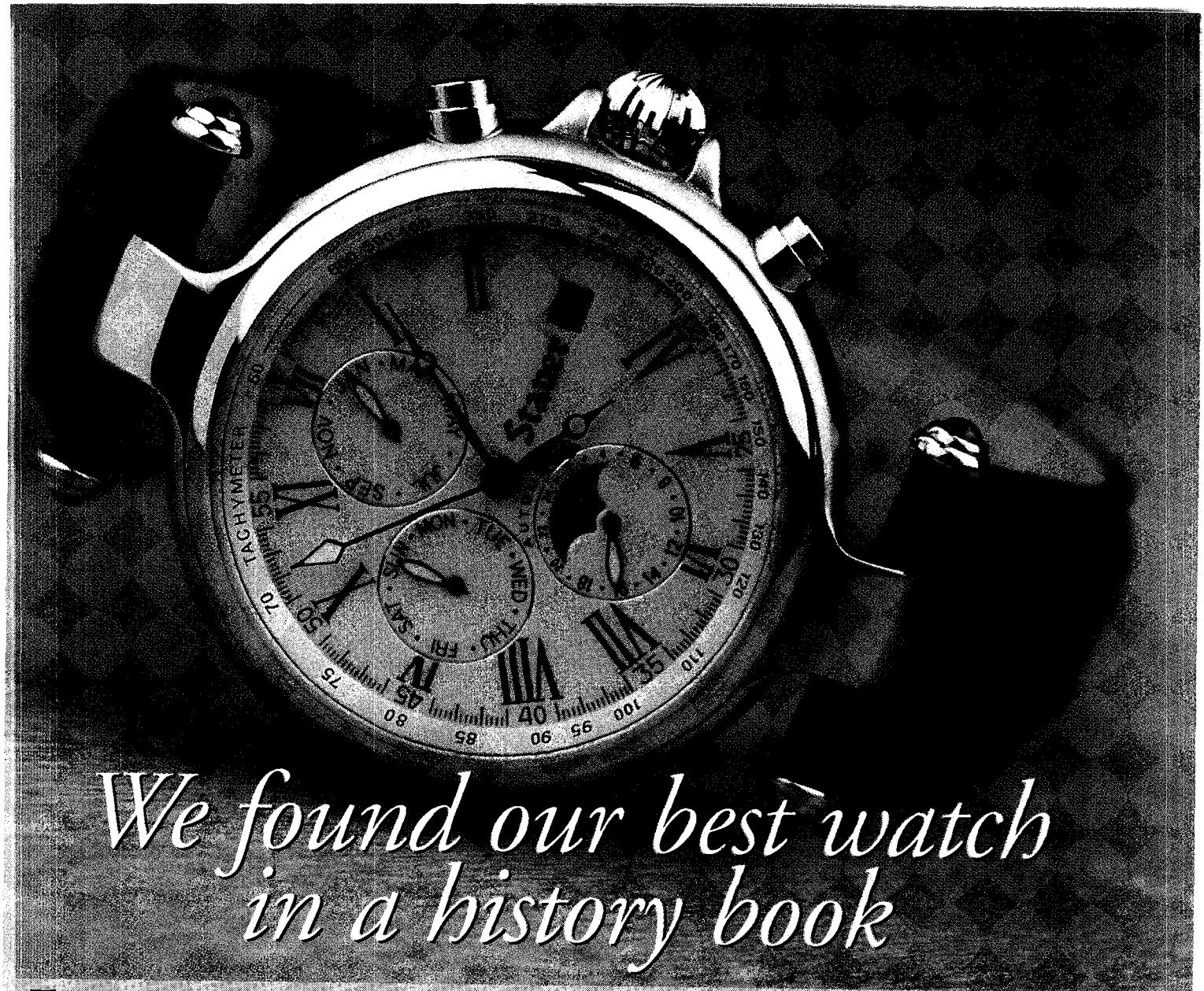

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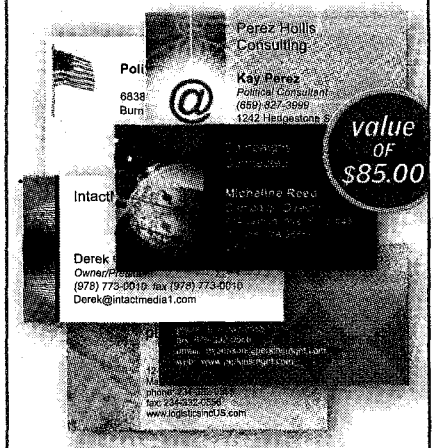

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viewed Chávez supporters in the ranchos, those makeshift neighborhoods that rim the basin of Caracas, where shanties are piled up by the thousands like teetering stacks of broken crockery; they went into the whitewashed apartment blocks of the central city, where Chávez's opponents warned one another to beware their domestic servants and be prepared to use firearms. It looks to me as if Bartley and O'Briain were gathering material to portray Chávez as a popular and fundamentally democratic leader, who champions the impoverished majority and stands up to the oligarchs, at home and in Washington. I'm not saying this reading of the situation is wrong, just that the filmmakers must have been inclined from the outset to believe it. They found scenes (no doubt plentiful) to confirm their opinion.

Then events gave them more urgent scenes, which transformed their project from a reasoned polemic into the documentation of a crime. In early April 2002, they recorded the inflammatory broadcasts on private television that threatened Chávez with a coup, provoking his supporters to gather outside the Miraflores Palace and helping to rally an opposition march. Soon after, Bartley and O'Briain were on the spot when the march approached the palace, and snipers suddenly opened fire on the Chávez supporters. The ensuing gunfight produced images, repeatedly broadcast on private Venezuelan television and reported in the United States, that seemed to show Chávez's irregulars shooting from a bridge at unarmed protesters below. Bartley and O'Briain have telltale footage that wasn't broadcast or reported: images that show there were no marchers under the bridge, but that the Chávez gunmen, in between taking shots, were cowering under fire.

Over the hours that followed, Bartley and O'Briain had the guts to continue filming on the streets, capturing scenes of a bloody police crackdown on Chávez loyalists. Meanwhile, in the Miraflores Palace, a staff cameraman was filming the entry and self-congratulatory speeches of the coup leaders, and the events surrounding the late-night negotiations in which Chávez refused to resign but allowed himself to be removed under arrest, to avoid a military assault on the building. This extraordinary footage, too, is incorporated into *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*. And so are scenes of an astonishing broadcast the following morning on private television, in which journalists and coup leaders boasted, out loud and explicitly, about having planned the previous day's confrontation as the occasion to seize power.

So private television, which had broadcast so many slanders about Chávez, now blurted out a confession. In turn, the state television channel—a propaganda vehicle for Chávez, like him or not—also reported a plain fact, to immense effect. After having been shut down for forty-six hours, the station resumed broadcasting from the Miraflores Palace when Chávez loyalists retook the building. They were, however, cut off from military forces throughout Venezuela, who continued to believe what they were hearing on private TV. When state TV got out the word that the elected government was back in the palace, soldiers began declaring their loyalty, and the coup was broken.

I conclude that you will know the truth through moving images, and the truth will make you free. It has the power to do so precisely because images are so often made to lie. Sometimes, as with the private TV stations, the truth is pushed out only by internal pressure, as in psychoanalysis. Sometimes, as with state TV, the medium must be reduced to its most basic function before it sends a clear and factual signal. And sometimes, as with Bartley and O'Briain, events need to force themselves on an informed preconception, so the work becomes more than the filmmakers had planned. *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* incorporates all three kinds of truth-telling. It is not just a documentary but an invaluable document. I'd almost call it prophetic.

Speaking of prophecy: *The Matrix Revolutions* is now upon us, confirming my forecast of a pathetic dwindling of the series, while resolving the trilogy's eclectic oracularism into greeting-card Christianity. Should you be determined to put yourself through the experience, you should know that the modal average shot in this installment is of a shaky, blue-gray background, crossed very noisily by yellow and orange streaks. (They represent bullets or electrical sparks, of which there are a gazillion.) The background music, which runs nonstop, sounds like an amplification of one of Richard Wagner's attacks of dyspepsia. The dialogue goes like this:

"You did it."

"No, we did it."

"Some things in this world never change."

"But some things do?"

(A verbatim excerpt.)

Laurence Fishburne's face has bloated toward near-Brando fullness (I hadn't realized the rebels of Zion ate so well), Keanu Reeves seems more stunned than ever (with no boyishness left to redeem him) and Hugo

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Weaving, as a computer program that is far more expressive than any human in the picture, now is pressed to overact for hundreds of himself.

For most *Nation* readers, *The Matrix Revolutions* will be interesting only as an embarrassment to Cornel West. (Wanting to be movie-cool, Professor West accepted a cameo role in this and the previous episode, and so embedded himself in the hippest film of the late Clinton Administration.) But for *Nation* readers who have seen *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, there is something more to be learned from this picture, which will no doubt add mightily to the revenues of the *Matrix* trilogy even while loosening its grip on the popular imagination. Here, too, we encounter a theme of mediated experience, and of truth versus lies. But simply on the level of plot, the filmmakers, the Wachowski brothers, fail utterly to sustain their premise. After the last booms and screeches have cleared from the air, after salvation is declared and the final, timid half-irony is proposed (for anyone desperate enough to seize on it), the horror that set off the story remains in place, unchanged and now, apparently, forgotten.

Have a good life, Wachowski brothers.

Hard experience has taught me to beware documentaries that invite us along on the filmmaker's personal journey. (A particularly awful subset: The films my friends summarize as, "Let's drag grandma back to Poland, so she can see where her whole family was killed!") But when the filmmaker is as tactful about himself as Nathaniel Kahn, and when his journey is so odd, suggestive and important, I can only be grateful for the chance to ride along. Kahn's *My Architect*—another Film Forum offering, as it happens, opening November 12—strikes me as one of the most rewarding pictures of the year.

The title might have been *My Father*, had Kahn been given the chance to know one. A father forms you—builds you up, ideally. In this case, though, the father was Louis I. Kahn, perhaps the most revered American architect of the last half of the twentieth century, who never acknowledged the son he'd had out of wedlock with Nathaniel's mother (or the daughter he had out of wedlock with another woman). Nathaniel saw the great man only for brief moments, usually at night, when Lou took a few hours off from his official family. When Kahn died in 1974, world-famous but short on clients and deeply in debt, Nathaniel was 11. A quarter of a century later, Nathaniel set out to discover his maker—his architect—the only way he could: through Kahn's buildings and the people who knew about them.

The pathos of *My Architect*—which fortunately remains understated—lies in the tension between public and private life, but also between the monumentality of Lou's buildings, their seeming timelessness, and the shadowy, contingent existence to which he condemned his son. On the one hand, Nathaniel can take beauty shots of his father's Kimbell Art Museum, put the "Ode to Joy" on the soundtrack, and have the building actually stand up to the music. On the other hand, Nathaniel follows this sequence with a snippet of interview with architect Robert A.M. Stern. "Don't put him up on some pedestal," Stern says. "He was in the trenches."

My Architect does full justice to both truths. And if it proves that Kahn's buildings can hold up against Beethoven, it also forces Kahn the man to hold up against a moment like this: Nathaniel is in California, interviewing an architect who worked with his father on the great complex for the Salk Institute. In mid-anecdote, the man mentions, "I spent Christmas with him."

Nathaniel interrupts, in a tone that for politeness' sake I will call wondering. "You spent Christmas!" he gasps. ■

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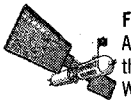

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LAS VEGAS AREA *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is looking for new members. Contact Harold Barling, (702) 736-6905 for more information.

ALBUQUERQUE *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP meeting regularly. Call (505) 797-1455 or e-mail Helena7128@aol.com for more information.

BRONX (RIVERDALE)/WESTCHESTER, NY, *NATION* DISCUSSION Group meets one afternoon a month. For further information please phone Florence Gold at (718) 549-1601.

BROOKLYN, PARK SLOPE, NY, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP looking for new members. E-mail George Schroeder, schroeg@verizon.net, for details.

ASHEVILLE, NC, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP IS FORMING. Contact Jerry McKinney for more information: Call (828) 452-7603 or e-mail jaymac_enterprises@yahoo.com.

CINCINNATI *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP meets regularly. Call Judith or Herbert Shapiro at (513) 861-4641.

EASTERN OKLAHOMA *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP looking for members. Please contact Howard Kelley at (918) 627-9136.

OKLAHOMA CITY *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP meets regularly at the Full Circle Book Store, 50 Penn Place, 1900 NW Expressway St. Please call Hal Cousins at (405) 677-3623 or e-mail Bob Nichols, bobnichols@cox.net for further information.

ORGANIZATIONS

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE HOUSTON *NATION* DISCUSSION group? Contact Charles Mauch at (713) 524-2492 or e-mail chasmauch@aol.com.

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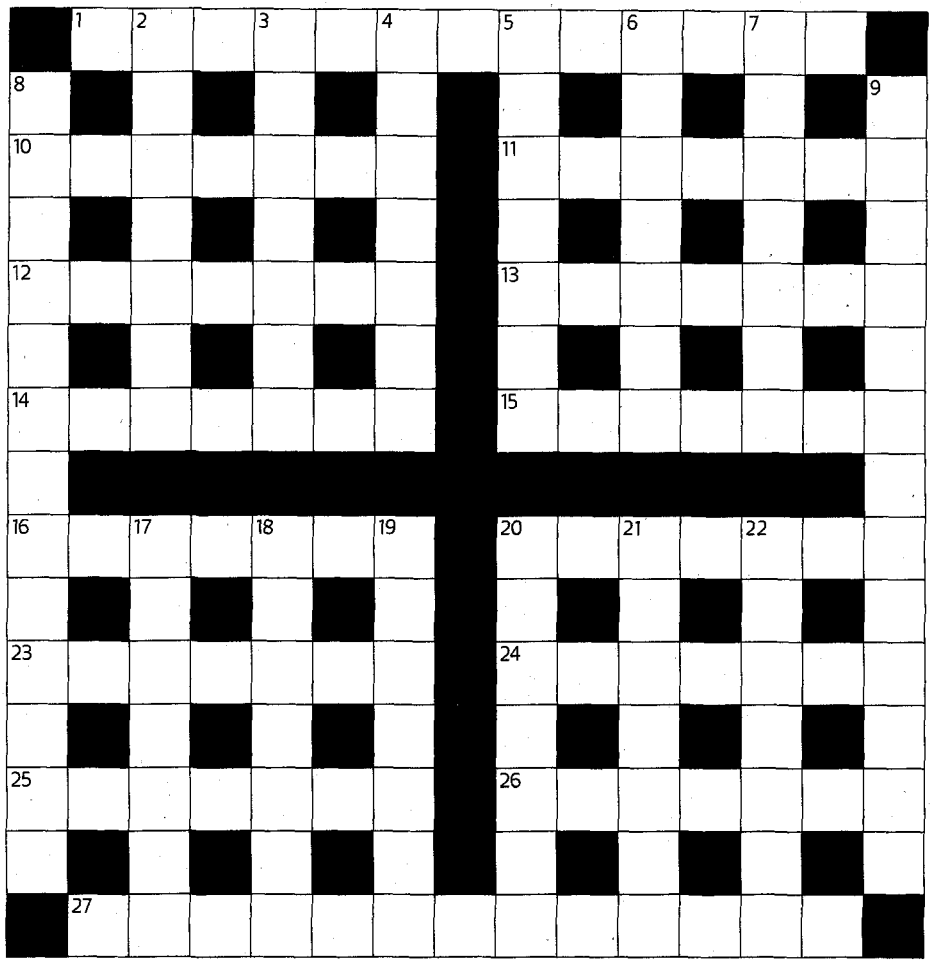
PUZZLE NO. 2916

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 They sound like early birds, but seem to be sorry for those who have gone before them. (8,5)

10 They might go to your head, when you feel the heat. (3,4)

11 Perhaps his must make a connection of some sort. (7)

12 Did such a person not want to work on things that might be a dud, mixed up with the laying of tile? (7)

13 Water showing no sign of life? (At ease, Dad!) (4,3)

14 Palms get this, like, in wanting too much. (7)

15 Jackets full of Mary Jane? (7)

16 Not so common as the result of a wound certainly begins. (7)

20 Sounds doubly masculine, but the post he has doesn't usually belong to him. (7)

23 What follows many business names has some sort of money that most people need. (7)

24 Probably not where the Rams were mixed up as an institution. (7)

25 When he disappeared, people expected him to make a return appearance. (7)

26 Perhaps an arm gets in first, with nothing at the end of it, but you certainly won't get attention this way! (2,5)

27 "Attention!" might be, if you are sitting down, but you expect repeated delivery with it. (8,5)

DOWN

2 and **17** Bill may arrive as a result of the story being held up. (7,7)

3 Perhaps are on the wrong side, but that's the way one gets things prepared! (7)

4 Possibly detains what you hold to be otherwise. (7)

5 Is a bad girl due to make money with it? (7)

6 Not an "in" engagement, being a way to make something passé. (7)

7 Men might be upset when on such stormy seas—a whole lot of such together! (2,5)

8 Where the spread contained nuts and such to be a good place to try on shoes. (7,6)

9 A couple of fools over one country—possibly because someone made a real killing with it. (13)

17 See 2 down

18 The flower of the poet, being a sort of icon around a British lawmaker. (7)

19 A cold southern sea in one, according to the composer. (7)

20 This makes a nasty gin sling—if you have an understanding with it! (7)

21 Clinton said he wasn't one, but it might help you to get something off your chest. (7)

22 Sounds like a proposal from a victim of lockjaw—but it's Carmen's father. (7)

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/about/crossword.mhtml.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2915

M	A	R	Y	H	A	D	■	A	L	I	T	T	L	E
E	■	E	■	O	■	I	■	N	■	D	■	R	■	S
D	E	P	O	R	T	S	■	T	E	L	E	O	S	T
I	■	U	■	S	■	T	■	E	■	E	■	P	■	E
U	N	T	I	E	■	U	N	D	E	R	F	I	R	E
M	■	E	■	R	■	R	■	U	■	■	■	C	■	M
■	B	■	L	A	M	B	■	P	E	R	V	A	D	E
D	U	O	■	C	■	■	■	■	■	A	■	L	E	D
E	G	G	H	E	A	D	■	R	A	R	E	■	N	■
N	■	E	■	■	■	I	■	A	■	E	■	T	■	A
S	T	E	A	M	O	P	E	N	■	E	V	E	N	S
E	■	A	■	A	■	T	■	C	■	A	■	D	■	T
F	O	R	E	S	E	E	■	H	E	R	O	I	N	E
O	■	C	■	O	■	R	■	E	■	T	■	U	■	R
G	E	H	E	N	N	A	■	S	C	H	E	M	E	S

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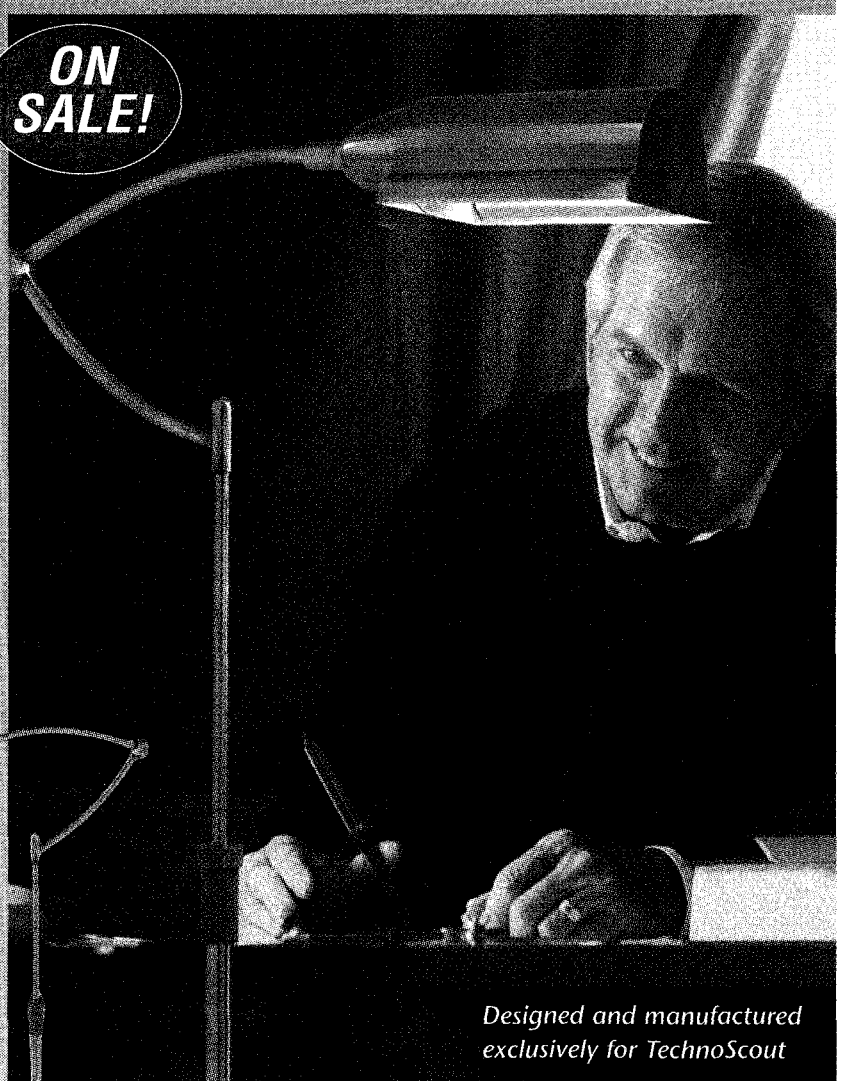
What do you really want from a floor lamp?

Functionality is one aspect – how well does it light a room? A certain space? Style is another – it should complement the décor of the room, and still be bold enough to stand on its own. In the past, having a high-tech lamp that replicates natural daylight meant that you had to settle for a design that hardly qualifies as "stylish." That's exactly why Tensor, pioneers in the lighting industry for nearly half a century, created the Brass Full Spectrum floor lamp. The beautifully designed and artfully crafted Brass Full Spectrum floor lamp combines the technology you'd expect from a bulb that lasts up to 10,000 hours and replicates the sun indoors with the style that graces any room you put it in.



Designed and manufactured exclusively for TechnoScout

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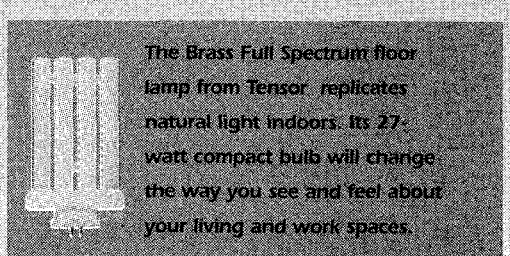
The Brass Full Spectrum floor lamp from Tensor replicates natural light indoors. Its 27-watt compact bulb will change the way you see and feel about your living and work spaces.

The style everyone will admire. With its brass finish and gorgeous design, this floor lamp will draw lots of compliments! Its swivel position arm, adjustable height and pivoting shade all combine to make a highly stylish, sophisticated, high-tech lamp that looks at home in any room you place it. The Brass Full Spectrum floor lamp comes with a manufacturer's 2-year warranty, and TechnoScout's exclusive risk-free, 30-day trial. If you aren't completely satisfied with this lamp, simply return it within 30 days for the full purchase price.

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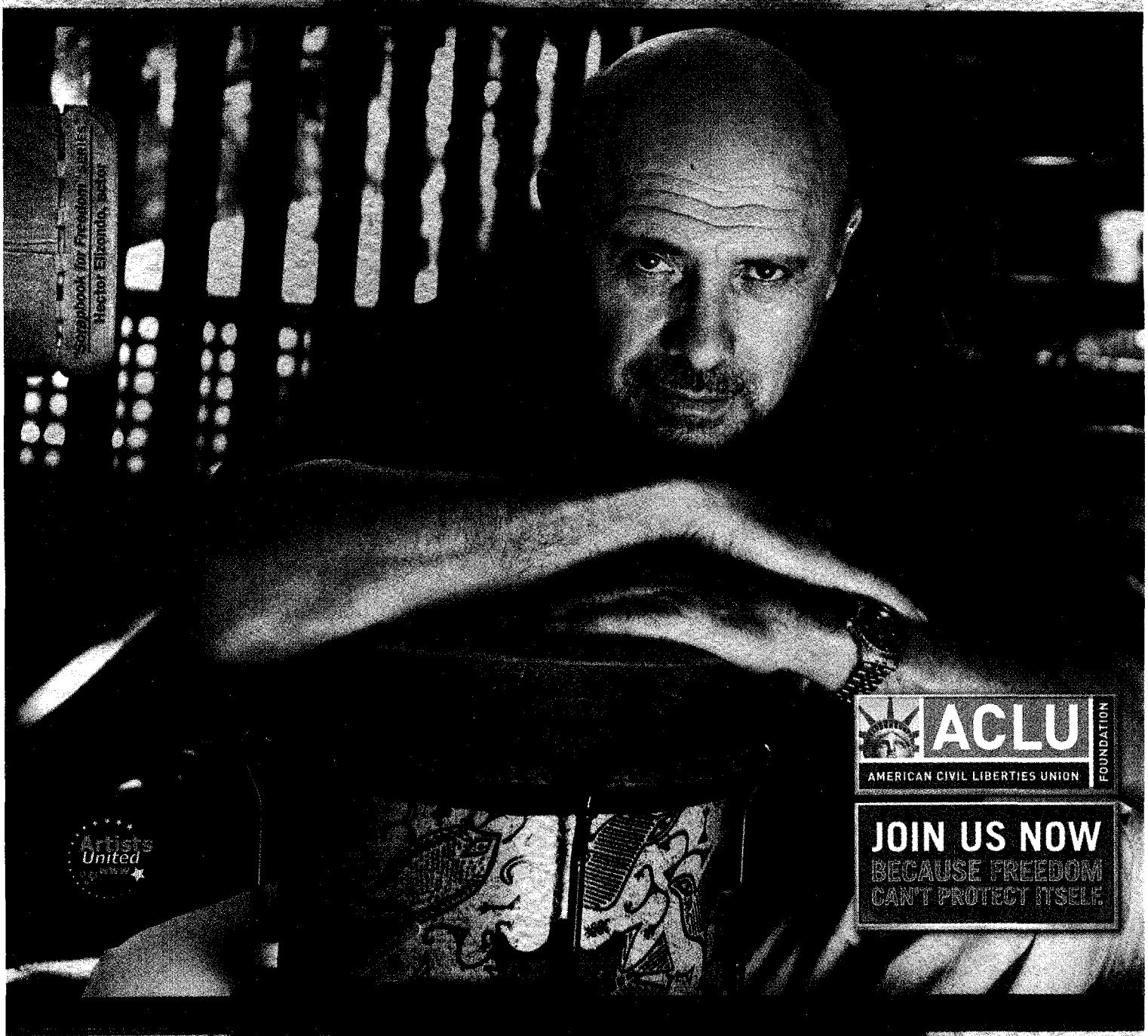
I AM NOT AN AMERICAN

WHO "WILL CUT THE CLOTH OF MY CONSCIENCE TO FIT THIS YEAR'S FASHIONS."[1]



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[1] Lillian Hellman, from testimony before The Senate Committee on Un-American Activities, 1952

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